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Thomas F. Torrance

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ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE

I have compared the list of names  
(names) and find nothing  
different from the original list  
except the name of the  
son of the deceased, who is  
now living in the family.

Respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
John A. Smith

IMPRIMATUR.

EDINBURGH, 12th. February, 1686.

I have considered this Book ( entituled *JACOB'S Vow*, ) and find nothing therein repugnant to the *Protestant Religion*, or contrary to the Government of the Church or State of this Kingdom ; And therefore allows the same to be Printed,

*Jo. Edinburgh.*

J A C O B S

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O R,

MAN'S FELICITY

A N D

D U T Y.

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In two PARTS.

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By JOHN COCKBURN,  
*Minister of the Gospel,*  
*at Ormeston.*

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EDINBURGH,

Printed by J. Reid for Alexander Ogston,  
Stationer in the Parliament  
Cloſs. 1686.



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## THE PREFACE.

**T**HE Scope of the Following Treatise may be read in the Tittle. The true Design hereof is to direct to *True Felicity*, to shew wherein it consist<sup>s</sup>, and what is our Duty, that is, what are the necessary Means we should use in order to the obtaining it. And as there is little said, but what is subservient to the *Main Design*; so the Treatise being chiefly intended for Common use, therefore 'twas Judged fit to study Plainness and Perspicuity, rather than fine Language, or quaint Expressions; and therefore also the Proofs and Evidences of what was necessary to be said on this Matter, are drawn from obvious things, which are neither so abstract from common observance as to be gainsaid, nor yet so abstruse and perplex, as to need much Learning,

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## The Preface.

and more then Ordinary Capacity to understand them. Nothing is delivered but what may be easily understood; and if the least serious Attention be given in reading the same; I am confident they will go away fully convinced of the Truth thereof.

It is true, no new discovery is pretended here, all which is here said of *Mans Felicity and Duty*, are *Old and known Truths*: But however, People have need to be taught them, to be put in mind of them, and to be stirred up to a due Observance of them; and that not only because they are Necessary and Important things, but also because they are very ready to forget them, and meet with many things Dayly which divert the sense and Practice of what thus evidently belongs to their *Felicity*. Folly and Errour, *Atheisme* and *ungodliness*, take Men off the way of Happiness, and they are dayly abounding; and many Pamphlets and Discourses spread which help forward their growth



growth: Common *Charity* therefore obligeth every one to do what he can to stay and extirpate these, to discover the Mischief of them, and to contribute such *Help* as he is able to the maintenance of *Truth*, *Virtue* and *Piety* which are the foundations of our *Present Peace*, and *Future blisse*. Out of this respect to the Common Good of Mankind, I have been induc'd to publish this Discourse such as it is, and I *Heartily Pray GOD*, to carry home the Convictions of what is here handled upon the Reader, that he may be as Dutifull as is here Directed, and by being so, arrive at all the *Felicity* here mentioned, which certainly is all that is necessary, and even as much as heart can wish.

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# JACOB'S VOW

O R

## MAN'S FELICITY, AND DUTY.

### PART I.

Gen. chap. 28. verse 20. *And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if GOD will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,*

21. *So that I come again to my fathers house in peace; then shall the LORD be my GOD.*

22. *And this stone which I have set for a pillar, shall be GOD'S House; and of all that thou shalt give me, I surely will give the tenth unto Thee.*

### CHAPTER I.

*The occasion of this Vow, of Vows in general, their Use, what should be the Matter of them, and how necessary it is to keep them.*

**T**HE Occasion of Jacob's making this Vow, was this, his Parents had sent him away to Padan-aram for fear of his

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his being corrupted by the Inhabitants of *Canaan*, where they lived, and enticed to take one of their daughters to wife, like as his Brother *Esin* had done: Now as he was on his journey he happened upon a certain place (afterwards called *Bethel*) where he tarried all night, the Sun having set upon him before he came thither, and the *Canaanites* not being so courteous as to invite him into their houses, he was necessitate to lodge in the open field: but though men denied him entertainment, yet he found what was much better and more comfortable, that he was highly favoured of GOD, for there He appeared to him in a dream, and made him the promise of large and great blessings; as you may see in the 13, 14, 15, Verses. Upon which, when *Jacob* awakened and considered it, *the fear and dread of GOD fell upon him*, and to testifie his gratitude and thankfulness to GOD, who had thus graciously appeared unto him, he spake these words, and vowed this Vow, by which he bound and obliged himself to serve, honour and worship GOD, if so be that he did these things which were promised.

This vow was not made rashly and inconsiderately, but upon serious and mature deliberation, nor is the matter thereof light  
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and trivial, but weighty and important. It is certainly worthy our consideration, and hereby we may be instructed in very material points, viz. Wherein our felicity consists, what is the thing we should aim at while in this world, and what is our duty towards GOD: What *Jacob* asked, teacheth the one; and what he promised, sheweth the other, as will appear afterwards. But first we will take occasion to treat of Vows in general, as to their matter, use, and observance, and thereafter we shall handle this *vow of Jacob's* in particular.

First then in general, a *Vow* is an holy *of Vows* and religious promise made to GOD, either for some mercy and favour, or upon the desire of some blessing, as here: And there be many instances in Scripture, of Prayers put up to GOD, by way of *Vows*, when our Prayers are accompanied with *Vows*, it doth be-speak a belief of power, and good-will, and particular knowledge on GOD'S part; and earnestness, importunity, and a gratefull Disposition on ours which are things GOD very much delights in. And this may be the reason why they are ordinarily so effectually and so successful; For 'tis observable that such Prayers prevaile very much with GOD, and do almost alwayes

obtain not only a Blessing, but even the very same thing prayed for. Thus *Jacob* obtained his whole desire. Thus *Jephthah* however rash in the matter of his *Vow*, yet out of a Devout Acknowledgement, having vowed to the LORD, got a Victory over the *Ammonites*; So likewise *Hannah* received a Child of the LORD, after that She had made a *Vow*. And thus we have read and heard of many, who upon their *Vows* have been delivered from great Straits and Difficulties, recovered of sore and Dangerous Sickneses, and been Blessed with signal Mercies and Favours. All which teacheth us, that in cases of great need, or the threatening of Dangers, upon the various and great changes of our Life, in all great and weighty enterprises, whose success doth very much concern us, and in all our most solemn Approaches to GOD, I say, that in *these*, or the *like cases*, it may not be amiss, but good and proper to back and strengthen our Prayers by some Pious and Religious *Vow*. For hereby we testifie, that we believe GOD able to grant what we ask, and that we our selves will retain a grateful sense of His Kindness, if so be he do it; and besides, this will awaken our minds to a due and serious attention, and add Fervour and Earnestness to

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our Devotions, which endeareth both us and them to GOD, and so probably will wrest a Blessing from Him. We should never offer to ask any thing of GOD without resolving to serve him better, or glorifie Him more upon the granting our Desires and Requests; as we would wish him to do us good, so we should lay obligations upon our selves to do him all Acceptable Service; and it is but impudence and mockery to endeavour to get God to befriend us, without thinking to become thereby the more dutiful to him. Wherefore every one of our Prayers and Addressees to GOD do contain vows implicitly, although we make no express mention of them, for they imply alwayes a promise and resolution to endeavour to please God, without which they were but meer abominations unto him.

But as it is good sometimes to make particular Vows, when we pray for any special blessing, and alwayes necessary upon all our Addressees to GOD, to resolve in the general to serve him and to do His will; so it is not good to be rash and inconsiderat in making of Vows: There is nothing about which we should deliberat more, and therefore it is that young Persons, and such as are not come to maturity of age, or understanding, are discharged

charged by all Casuists from the making of vows, because their ignorance and want of knowledge may make them readily erre in this matter, and Vow what is not lawfull or convenient to be vowed. Good Religious and lawful vows doe honour GOD, and are very acceptable to him : But if they be rash, inconsiderat, and in matters either not lawfull, or not fit, and proper, they do but displease him. If we be to *Vow*, then we must both use all Caution and Prudence in the making of them, and likewise see carefully to the observing of them, otherwise we had better not *Vow* at all.

First in the making of *Vows*, we should shun all rashness and inconsideration, and ought to take heed, that both the thing we promise to GOD, and that which we make the Condition of it be Lawfull, and Agreeable to his will, for if this be wanting, we offer but the Sacrifice of Fooles, and both our Prayers and *Vows* become an abomination unto GOD. What we aske, must either be something he hath commanded, or Allowed us to seek; It must neither thwart his Will, nor be unworthy of Him to grant; and how earnest soever we be, yet our desires must always be attended with a Submission to his Holy Will and Pleasure, for 'tis then  
only

only that we are to be confident GOD will hear us, when *we ask according to his Will*. And as we must thus use Modesty and Caution in our Prayers, taking heed that what we pray for, be not offensive to GOD, so we ought to shew great Prudence and Discretion in these *Vows & Promises* we make to God upon the granting our Prayers: we must see that the thing promised be both Warrantable in it self, and convenient for us in particular. Many have brought themselves with *Jephthah* into great snares and temptations by their *Vows*, because they did not consider the matter of them before hand.

This we should chiefly look to, and therefore that we may not make our *Vows* a lasting snare to our selves, we shall do well either to keep within some branch of our Duty, as the doing such and such a thing which we are already oblig'd to, either by our *general Callings* as *Christians*, or by our *particular Calling* as being in such a place or station; the doing of some such thing, I say, in a more excellent manner, with a greater inclination of the Will, with a more fervent repetition of the Act, with some more noble Circumstance, with a fuller assent of the Understanding, or such like thing; for by this *Vow of Jacobs*, it is clear that it is neither improper



proper nor impertinent to pitch upon what we are already tied to by *prior obligations* : Or if we have a mind to tie our selves to any thing uncommanded , or to which we are not necessarily oblidge , as it is proper and requisite to do in our more *Solemn and Special Vows* ; then let us make choise of something useful and Serious , Grave and Weighty , something that tends to the Glory of GOD , the Benefit of others , or the bettering of our own Souls ; at least , let it have an indirect subserviency to some of these ends , by putting us in greater capacity to advance them , otherwise our *Vows* degenerat into *abominable superstition*. As for example , It is but superstition , and doth not at all please GOD , if we tie our selves to forbear such a kind of Meat or Drink , unless it be because we have found our selves provoked to lust upon the use thereof , or that we do fear this effect of it . And it avails very little to *vow* the fasting or not working such or such a day , unless we imploy that time we thus redeem from Meat and Labour , in the exercises of *Piety and Devotion* , and the improvement of our selves in Christian Wisdom and Vertue . *Bodily exercises profiteth nothing* , as saith the *Apostle* , 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. Corporal Austerities are not acceptable to GOD in themselves , and  
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he must have mean thoughts of him who thinks it: but only in so far as they serve and are instrumental to mortifie the flesh, with the lusts thereof, such as Pride, Vain Glory, Uncleanneſs, Effeminacy, Wrath, Anger, and the rest. It is the end and effect of these and the like observations which make them either acceptable or unacceptable to GOD, if they prove to His Glory, or render us more capable to advance it, if they promote the works of Religion in us, and further us in doing good to others, GOD is well pleased: But if the fruits of them appear little this way, He doth little regard them.

And hence it doth appear; how little true Piety there is in many of these Vows which are usually allowed and enjoined in the Romish Church; For first, the matter of some of them is so mean, and trivial, that it is a Scandal upon Religion to make Religion of them, as the vowing a Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to visit such a Chappel, or such an Image there, not to eat of the head of any Animal in honour of John the Baptist, or broiled Fish in respect to St Laurence, or to give some wax Candles, Silver Puppets, or the like Childish conceits to be kept, or hung up in some Church or Chappel; when people are taught and suffered to place Devoti-

on in such small things, it cannot but lessen their esteem of GOD, and contribute to make them think meanly of him, even as we of *Europe* look with disdain upon the Kings and Princes of the late discovered World, when we read how brass pins, and glass beads, and such like silly toys please them, and gain their favour. Solemn presents to Kings ought to answer their dignity, otherwise they are dishonoured, and so God is dishonoured when the matter of our *Vows* is a meer trifle, or some naughty thing, which was the reason why under the Law, He discharged *to bring the hire of a Whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the Lord thy God for any Vow, Deut. 23. 18.* But secondly, there be other Vows of the *Romish Church* whose matter indeed is grave enough, which yet must be reckoned among *unlawful Vows*, because of their pernicious consequence: And these are their *Monastical Vows*, of *Celibacy*, *Implicite and absolute Obediences*, and *external poverty*; or rather the abandoning all honest and civil employments used to gain a livelyhood in the World. They place Religion so much in these Vows, that the name of Religion is appropriat to them, and they only among them are called *Religious* who have taken on them such *Vows*: When  
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yet it is certain that these things are not absolutely good in themselves, or pleasing to GOD; And seeing they who marry, and follow secular Employments, not onely do not sin, but also thereby observe the *Ordinances of GOD* and his *Providence*; I cannot see a Reason why the title of *Religious* should be denied them, and not thought as much due to them, if so be other things requisite concur to make them deserve it. And it cannot be denied, but that Persons may serve GOD the one way, as well as the other, for these examples which the Scripture sets before us, are drawn not from *Monkish* or *Cloistered Persons*, but from such as were Married, and did commonly Traffique and entertain Commerce with the World; Which, however are more useful for teaching solid Vertue and Piety, than the lives of their *Saint Francis*, *Saint Laurence*, *Saint Teresa*, or any other Ancient or Modern, which they can produce from their *Monastries*. But that we may take a particular view of these *Vows* severally, That of *blind and absolute Obedience* cannot be lawfully promised to any Creature: GOD ought to be obeyed without any reservation, the plain intimation of his Will obligeth to Obedience, though the Reason thereof be not apparent, because

we owe our selves and all we have to him : But as this is due to *GOD* , so to none else, because none other hath *Absolute Dominion* over us. Therefore to obey any blindly without considering whether it be good or evil, which they enjoyne, is to pay *Divine Honour* to Man. Our subjection to others should be alwayes with a subordination to *GOD*, and with a respect to his Glory ; and seing no man is so infallibly wise, but he may mistake evil for good, nor so certainly good, but that he may enjoin evil though he know it, therefore we ought not to do every thing another bids us, until we have examined the same, and found it no wise offensive to *GOD*, by being contrary to his Will. And even to make a *Religion* of obeying another in things not evil, but as to their nature indifferent, is to destroy our *Christian liberty* , and to cast our selves again into an *useless bondage*; As to the *vow of external povertie* which proves to be either the renouncing of *secular employments*, and these Arts & Trades whereby men ordinarily are necessitat to seek their living, this can be no acceptable service to God , seeing it runs counter to his expresse ordinance, *in the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread*, if men can free themselves of the necessity of eating and drinking, they may

may cast off all honest care and endeavours for these supplies, otherwise they ought not, for St. Paul commands, *that if any would not work, neither should he eat*, and such as work not at all, he saith, *that they walk disorderly*, 2 Thess. 3. 10. Sick and Maimed persons who cannot work for their own Maintenance, should be supplied by others Charity, but not these who are Able and Healthy, but resolved to live idly and uselessly to the Commonwealth. And herein the present *Monks* of the *Romish Church* differs much from those of the *Primitive times*, for the *Ancient Monks* did not eat their bread in idleness, but did labour, that they might help others to live, every one should study to be *poor in Spirit*, and *mortified in his affections to the World*, but these may be done in outward possessions. Finally, as to the *Vows of Celibacy* and a *total retirement*, they are too important things to be undertaken by any rashly ; and they are such as young Persons should not be suffered at all to engage in : for they cannot well know either the Temper of their Spirit, or the Constitution of their Body, how they will agree therewith. If their disposition be contrary, then they involve themselves into a sad inconveniency, and almost insuperable difficulties of pleasing GOD ; which might  
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be easily avoided by taking a course more  
futable to their natural disposition. Not  
to speak of *Celibacy*, every ones humour  
even will not sute with that Solitude and  
retirement, which by the Laws of *Monastries*  
they are oblidge to: who are naturally Stu-  
dious, thoughtful, and a little Melanchollie,  
may like it well enough, and also fall upon  
methods for improving it to their growth  
in Vertue and Piety. But such as are active  
and sprightly weary, of it and count it a  
burden; And as their nature inclines them  
to action: so when they are any consider-  
able time without business, their fancy runs  
out upon vain projects and airy contrivan-  
ces, neither profitable to themselves, nor  
others; and which prove an Impediment  
to Spiritual devotion as much, yea more,  
then outward innocent actions. He who in  
his retirements bethinks with himself how he  
would rule the world, if he had place and  
power, and what he would doe or have  
done in such and such cases, spends his time  
more idly, then if he were actually verlant  
in Wordly affairs; And there be few active  
Spirits, but have their retirements ( if  
long ) Spoiled with such devices and i-  
maginations. The Church of *Rome*  
seems to have foreseen the inconve-  
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niencies of *Monasticall Vows*, & to guard against them, in that a year of probation is allowed: But it is evident from experience, and many instances, that a year is not proof sufficient, especially when arts and tricks are used to delude Novices, and to wheedle them into a belief that things are otherwise then what afterwards they find them. If Vows were not imposed, and that a free exit were allowed to such as pleased, and found a change convenient; I verily believe *Monastries* might be very usefull both for *Church and State*, both for the civil good of the Nation, and the Spiritual good of mens Souls. All men are oblidge to be chaste, but chastity may be preserved in a married State, as well as in a single life, and every ones constitution doth not sute therewith. It would be good and proper for every man, though never so much engaged in worldly affairs, to retire himself frequently for the excercise of Religion, and the considering the state of his soul: But hardly any can stay their minds altogether upon these exercises for whole years, much less all there lifetime, nor is there any necessity thereof, seing men may goe about the affairs of the world without crossing these of Religion, and ply the things of this life without prejudice to the other.

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GOD is not pleased with our vows, when they have not a tendency to his Glory, our Neighbours good, and our own Spiritual Advantage: and he cannot be but highly displeased, when by our vows we tie our selves to doe something which is unlawfull in it self, or which may be the occasion of some sin to our selves or others; Or to forbear another thing which is good or usefull, and which is or may become our duty;

What is sinful or evil, can never honour GOD, but doth dishonour him, and it doeth bewray a gross ignorance to seek the pleasing of God by doing contrary to His will: Unlawful Vows should not be made, and if made, they ought not to be kept, it is a sin to make them, but a greater to observe them, such Vows lay no obligation upon us, except to repentance, and mourning for our rashness and folly. Herod was no wayes tyed to cut off the head of *John the Baptist* because of his vow, for that would never excuse the murder of that innocent man: neither was the plot against *Pauls* life any whit extenuated because the *forty men* had bound themselves thereto under a curse. It is a very bad reason for one not to come to Church and to refuse to hear such a Minister, because he hath sworn it. There is no perjury

jury in breaking of these *Vows*, the Perjury is in the first making of them, because they are contrary to those other general *vows* of *Baptism*, &c. Whereby we are tyed not to do any thing that is evil, but *what ever is good and praise worthy*. Wherefore I wonder much how ever it could have slipt from the Author of that excellent Book, entituled, *The whole Duty of Man*, to say, *That he who rashly swears, to kill another, if he do it, he is guilty of murder, and if he do it not, of perjury, and so is under a necessity of sinning*. If this be true, it might prove a shrewd temptation to the keeping of unlawful *Vows*; For where one of two evils is necessary or unavoidable, men are at liberty to choose which they will, or what they think least: And there be some who have perjury in greater abhorrencia then anyother wicked act, & therefore if such have once sworn a thing though never so evil, they will do it, for fear of drawing on them the guilt of *perjury*. This Doctrine therefore may be of very bad consequence; but however such a necessity of sinning cannot be admitted, unlesse we make the nature of sin alterable, and that a sinful Act may sometimes cease to be sinful. One cannot be oblidged by any Law to impossibilities, and therefore not to contrary Acts, as to do,

and not to do the same thing, at one and the same time, for to observe both is impossible. Wherefore if the doing a thing be sin, there is onely an Obligation upon us not to do it; and if the not doing thereof be a sin, then the Obligation is onely to do it; We cannot be obliged to both, and so both cannot be sins. If it be objected, *that though one and the same obligation cannot bind to contrary things, yet we may be bound thereto by different Obligations as in the present case:* But to this I answer, That we are not under any Obligation, but what the Law of GOD layeth upon us, or doth allow; and seeing the Law of GOD requireth us alwayes to do good, and forbiddeth to do any evil, therefore a Man can never be said to sin, by the doing of a good Action, or the forbearance of what is evil, though he hath never so preremptorily *Vowed* the one, and sworn against the other: For his Vows and Resolutions cannot take away his Obligation to obey GOD, and his Law. I have insisted the longer on this head, because some are so tenacious of their rash and unlawful Oaths, and think it excusable enough for their continuance in a wicked course, that they have sworn and resolved it.

Religion certainly will never hallow an  
wicked



wicked or ungodly act, and it is an abomination to God to offer to worship and honour him by any thing sinful or unlawful: neither out of pretence of *Vows*, must we withdraw our selves from the duty and obedience we owe to others; for no *Vow* can take away that obligation which is upon Wife's to obey their Husbands, Children their Parents, Servants their Masters, Subjects their Prince; and which is upon one man to do good, and to shew acts of kindness and charity to another. Our Saviour taxed the *Scribes and Pharisees* for breaking the *fifth Commandment*, in not relieving their Parents when in want, upon the pretence that their goods were *Corban*, that is, they had Vowed and Devoted all they could spare, to the Temple, or other Pious uses, *Mark 7. 7, 11.* What we Vow and Devot to GOD must be our own, absolutely at our disposal, and no wayes tending to the detriment, or prejudice of others; else we cannot expect that it should be acceptable. Thus therefore it is not lawful for a Servant while he is a Servant to devote, and set apart whole days for private Prayer, Meditation, or other exercises of Religion, unless his Master concede and yield thereto: He may indeed if he please allow some portion of

his meat to the poor, or some part of the time he should eat or sleep for Spiritual exercises, for that is his own; but as for dayes or half dayes or any considerable quantity of time, belongs to his Master, and it would be a defrauding of him to take the same away without his consent and approbation. That which falls under anothers jurisdiction, must not be disposed off without their leave, for that were down right usurpation and robbery, wherefore GOD Num: 30. Gives the *Husband* power to dissolve the *Wife's Vow*, and the *Father* the *Child's*, And for the same reason the same Liberty must be assigned to other *Superiours*, whether *Masters* or *Magistrats*. And hence doth appear the unlawfulness of that Oath which hath so much troubled this Nation; viz. *The Solemn League and Covenant*. For besides what may be said to the *Matter thereof*, it was an incroachment upon the *Magistrats right*, and did engage *privat Persons* to that which was not within their Sphere, but did properly belong to the *Supreme Magistrat*, and the other *Governours of the Church*. When *Inferiours* make Vows to the prejudice of their *Superiours*, and in the *particulars* wherein they are *subjected* unto them, the Vows are *ipso facto* null and void; and the *Superiours* hath full power and authority

thority to annull and dispense with them.

The sum of what hath been said, is, that we must use consideration in the making of our *Vows*, and must look that the condition required be lawful and agreeable to GOD'S Word, and also the thing promised on our part not sinful and unlawful, a thing improper and unbecoming us, which dishonours GOD, prejudices others, and wrongs our own Souls, but that it be a thing lawful and allowable in it self, within our power and at our disposal, and designed and used by us for GOD'S Glory, our Neighbour's advantage, and our own Spirituall good especially. And *finally*, we ought to weigh well our strength and ability, and to have some ground to hope, that through GOD'S Grace it will match and master all the difficulties, we may encounter in observing such a particular as thus we tie our selves to. If we observe these directions and be thus circumspect in making of *Vows*, we do a thing well pleasing to GOD, but if we proceed not with this caution and discretion, they lose both of their Worth and Efficacy.

But Secondly, as we must use caution in making of *Vows*, so we must shew care to keep them in every particular, when they are made; Our care of the one must be as great

great as the other, otherwise we had rather a thousand times not make any at all. You may see how straightly both *Moses* & *Solomon* enjoyned the punctuall observing of such *Vows* as are made to GOD, the one *Deut: 23. 21.* The other *Eccl: 4: 5:* When we break our *Vows*, or swerve in any point from them, we draw upon us the guilt both of *Perjury* and *Ingratitude*, the most abominable of all sins, which have been ever most odious both to GOD and man, and which seldom pass unpunished, even in this life. All know what a dreadfull Judgment befell *Ananias* and his Wife *Saphira*, it was only because they *lied unto GOD*, and kept back from him what they had sworn to give. Nay, 'tis even observable of this same *Jacob*, who, for as dear as he was unto GOD, was yet afflicted with several sad disasters in his Family, because of his delaying the performance of this *Vow*: After his return to *Canaan* he did not presently (as he promised here) *worship GOD in this place*, but took up his residence elsewhere; and then fell out the Ravishment of his Daughter, *Dinah*, and the slaughter of the *Sichemites* by his two Sons *Simeon* and *Levi*; and that it was his not keeping of his *Vow* which occasioned GOD thus to punish him, may appear from

from this, that GOD immediatly enjoyned him the going up to *Bethel* as a redress of these troubles, as you may see *Gen. 35. 1.* There are many more sad instances almost in every History, how GOD had plagued those who Vowed to him in their troubles; but forgot him when he had delivered them out of their distresses; and though God may spare his roade a while in this life, yet they shall not escape altogether unpunished; especially in the life to come.

Wherefore that we may draw to a conclusion of this point, I would seriously beseech every one to consider and call to mind what *Vows* they have at any time made unto GOD, when they were seeking any thing of importance from him, or when the fears of Death, or some other Danger were upon them, or when they were sitting at his Table and receiving pledges of his Love; In such and the like cases and circumstances, We are all ready enough to make Vows and Promises; I know not if we be all as ready to perform and accomplish them. It's to be feared, that too many are like bad Debtors, who either altogether refuse the payment of their debt, or else shift it off from day to day, and thereby do declare their folly and disingenuity, and  
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monstruous ingratitude. If GOD hath been so gracious as to hear us, should not we also be faithful in keeping the Promises we made to Him; following *Dauids* practice, *Psalm* 66. 13. where he saith, *I will go into thy house with burnt offerings, I will pay Thee my Vows which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken when I was in trouble;* And again, *Psalm* 116. 12. having asked himself, *What shall I render unto the LORD, for all His benefits towards me?* His answer & resolution was, *I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the LORD, I will pay my Vows unto the LORD, in the presence of all His People.* See and consider then I pray you, what have been your particular *Vows* and *Promises* at any time, and labour now to keep them faithfully; Did you promise to be more Holy? to have a greater Love and Zeal for GOD? Did you *Vow* to be more studious to advance his Glory? to be more Just and Honest in your Dealings, more kind to your Neighbours, and more Charitable to the Poor? Did you at any time pass your word that you would Pray oftner, and more fervently in privat by your selves, and take a care that the Worship of GOD be observed in your Family? That you would forbear Swearing and Drinking, loose and prophane

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company? did you promise greater Sobriety & temperance? Did you engage to bridle your passion? To be watchfull against Anger and Wrath, and to study Calmness and Peace? Did you engage to be more contented with your Allowances, and more thankfull for them? Did you vow to keep the Church better? To be a more Devout and attentive Hearer of GOD'S Word, and of the Instructions of his Servants? Have ye devoted any particular time for privat retirements and Converse with GOD, or any particular Moity of your Estates for Pious uses; Whether these, or whatever else have been the matter of your *Vows*, see that ye both Remember them, and also give diligence to oblerve them, neither mince thy *Vows*, nor defer the paying of them. Let it not be said that thou art liberrall in thy promises, but sparing in thy performances: Like him, who when he was in Hazard of perishing at Sea, promised a rich offering, but when he came to land, put it off with a penny matter. Keep thy Word to GOD, and doe it chearfully without grudging; Let not our present Ease and Prosperity blot out the Sense and Memory of his past Loving Kindness, neither let us account any thing too good for  
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God, or too much to be given him: We can give him nothing but what is his own, for all that we have, we received from him, and we can do nothing to him, but what is our bounden duty. And withall let us Remember, that we may have yet need of his Kindness: We may yet fall into straits and trouble, be seized with Sicknes and in fear of Death, and then how much will it concern us to have him our friend? but how, and with what confidence, can we cry unto him? if we now deal deceitfully with God, and break the word which we have uttered. That therefore we may avoid the Divine Vengeance and Displeasure, and also have GOD to be our refuge, and a present help in the time of trouble, let us Vow and pay our Vows unto the LORD, and keep every thing which hath gone out of our lips.

Thus we have spoken of *Vows* in Generall, have shewed the Nature of them, what Obligation there is on us to make them, what Caution should be used in the making of them, and what care to keep them when they are made.

## C H A P. II.

*Of Jacob's Requests, Mens Wisdom discernable by the matter of their Desires; GOD deny's no Requests, but what are unreasonable and improper, all that is necessary to compleat ones Happiness is contained in the particulars which Jacob here asks of the first, viz. the Divine Presence, what it is, and how excellent a Blessing, with an Exhortation to seek after it.*

**H**AVING taken occasion in the former Chapter upon *Jacobs Vowing*, to speak of *Vows* in general; we come next to treat of this *Vow* in particular, in which we have to consider these two things, viz. What he promised unto GOD, and what he craves of him as the condition of the Performance of that Promise. This last stands first in the *Text*, and therefore we shall handle it first.

Now *Jacob* craves here three things of GOD, first, that *GOD* would be with him, that is his Presence; Secondly, that he would keep him in his way, which is his Protection; Thirdly, that he would afford him his necessary maintenance of Food and Raiment; these are his desires; And in the fourth place,

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you have the end for which he asks these things, and it is that he may be brought *back to his Fathers house in peace.*

*Jacob* may seem at first to ask no great matter, his requests look not very big; and 'tis true they are modest and reasonable: But yet if they be duely considered and seriously canvass'd, they will be found to comprehend all that is necessary to compleat ones Happiness. There is nothing that discovers men more than their Requests and Petitions, for they do certainly speak out the *sentiments of their mind*, and what it is their Hearts set most value upon. It was once wittily said to a young man, *speak that I may see thee*, thereby signifying, that we know Men better by their Words than by their Faces: But this especially holds true, when their Words express their Desires. A Fool may be known by his desires, and a Wise man by his; For by these we may perceive easily what Knowledge and Understanding one hath, and what Inclinations and Dispositions, whether they have taken up right Measures of things, and do judge according to their true Nature, or only according to their outward appearance. Fools look only to the outward appearance, and if a thing glister, or make any big or splendid

splendid shew, they covet it, whatever it be in it self; But Wise men peirce through into the *inward nature* of things, & seek only what is Solide and Substantial, Good and Useful, like as the *Patriarch* did here. For in that he sought these and no other things from GOD, it shews him to have been Wise and Understanding, that he had ere this time weighed and pondered all things as they relate to Man, and found out what was Good, Proper and necessary for him.

And truly, would we restrain our Desires to these things *Jacob* here mentions, if we would make these all we aime at in reference to this Life, we should both Act more wisely than ordinarily we do, and should also find it much better with us; If we would put up such Requests as these unto GOD, he would certainly grant them, and in granting them we should find all that Comfort and Good which our Hearts can wish. It is not for want of Will or Power in GOD that our Petitions and Requests are not granted, for he is both *able and willing to do us good beyond the largest of our desires*: But it is because they deserve not to be granted, they are neither reasonable in themselves, nor put up for Good ends and Purposes, and so do carrie a reason of their



their refusal in their very bosome. A Parent denies his Child what he cries for, not for want of Love, but out of the Tender regard he hath to him, because he knows it would hurt him; and a Physitian doth not allow his Patient the *Meat* and *Drink* which he asks, not because he doth not desire his *Health* and *Recovery*: But because he perceives his *Appetite* vitiat, and disordered; and knows that the thing required would hinder his *Health*, and increase his *Distemper*. It is even so with *GOD*, the Reason why he heareth not our *Prayers*, is because they are not *Reasonable*, and that we do not wisely consider what we speak: *Ye ask, and receive not, (saith St. James) Because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts,* *Iam. 4.* 3. *GOD* cannot hear these *Prayers* which are prompted by *Lust*, *Sensuality*, *Pride*, *Ambition*, *Vain-glory*, *covetousness*, and the other disorders of our *Corrupt Nature*, which should rather be starved and stifled, than fostered and encouraged; and we may be sure *GOD* will never furnish us with *Weapons* to rebel against himself. But as *GOD* designs the good and *Happiness* of his *Creatures*, so if we intend no more than that, he will not deny us; if we seek really that which is good for us, and which may



may help forward the happiness we were Created for, He will freely bestow it: for he only rejects and upbraids these Prayers which respect not the Right end, neither observe the right means or measures, otherwise he gives to all men liberally and willingly. The advice therefore of the Poet is good,

*Quod justum est petito, vel quod videatur honestum:*

*Nam stultum est petere id, quod possit jure negari.*

Englisht thus,

Who would not have his Suite in vain,  
on what is Honest set his eye;  
He is a Fool, who thinks to obtain,  
what Reason justly may deny.

What the Heathen Satyrist also writes on this head, is not unworthy of a Christian, and deserves to be considered,

*Nil ergo optabunt homines? si consilium vis,*

*Permites ipsis expendere Numini, quid*

*Conveniat nobis, rebusq; sit utile nostris.* *Juvena  
sat. X.*

*Nam pro jucundis aptissima quæq; dabunt DEVS*

*Carior est illis homo, quam sibi. Nos animorum*

*Impulsu, & cæca, mag naque cupidine ducti,*

*Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris: at illis*

*Notum, qui pueri, qualisq; futura sit uxor.*

Englisht-

Englified thus,  
 Shall man then pray for nothing? if I may  
 Advise thee, let the God thy wishes weigh,  
 Unto *thy* Providence thy Will submit,  
 And for what's sweet, *thy*le give thee what  
 is fit.

And that which thy condition most behoves,  
 The God love man more then *Staph.*  
 himself he loves.

Transported with a blind-self-love we crave,  
 That all of us may Wives and Childen have,  
 But to the Omniscient *Deity*, alone,  
 What Wives, what Children we shall have,  
 is known.

Now there is no more necessary to compleat  
 our Happiness then what *Jacob* craves here,  
 all things else are superfluous, this alone is  
 sufficient to afford us all the comfort & satis-  
 faction we would be at, in these things lye  
 that good which men so much desires, but  
 know not how to find, as we may discern  
 by taking a particular view of them.

*of Gods* And first of the *Divine Presence*, which the  
*Presence* *Patriarch* here requires to accompany him.  
 A Staff and a Companion are very necessa-  
 ry in a Journey; It is a comfortless thing to  
 travel vvithout something to aid & support  
 us, and vvithout a friend vvith vvhom vve  
 may advise and consult, and in vvwhose so-  
 ciety

Society and Fellowship, we may Refresh and Solace our selves upon all Occasions. This *Jacob* perceived, and therefore he desired not to Travel alone, but intreated that GOD might accompany him. All company is not good, better want altogether than have some; And therefore Wise men use to make choice, and to look well whom they admit into Familiarity or an intimat Friendship; The better our Companions be, their company is still the more profitable, and we have the greater comfort in it; And if we would know where, and how to make choice of a True, Good, and Useful Friend, alwayes to go along with us, we may receive Direction from *Jacob* here; For he indeed hath pitched upon him. And this doth sufficiently Evince, what Wisdom and Knowledge this man had even at this time, when in the first place, and before all things he prayed that *God might be with him.*

But here some may ask and say, what needed *Jacob* ask the *Divine Presence* as a Singular and Peculiar Favour? Seeing that GOD is every where present, even with all Creatures. Did he think GOD, a local God, tied or confined to any place, or who being in one place, cannot be in another? No certainl

tainly, this Holy Man had no such mean and low thoughts of GOD; He was better instructed than to be so Ignorant of his Infiniteness and Immensity, he understood well enough *that the Heaven of Heavens could not containe Him, and that His Presence, Power and Glory filled both Heaven, and Earth,* he was a better *Philosopher* than not to know that His Presence and the actual Concurrency of His Power was requisite to the Preservation of all and every one of his Creatures, and that nothing could subsist without him. But it was not this generall presence, which every Creature enjoyes that *Jacob* begged, it was a more speciall presence wherebv he might shew that he was interested in Him, and concerned for him, a presence of Special Favour, Love, and Kindness, to be present, as to let it appear that he cared for him and studied his good: This is the Presence of GOD which *Jacob* requires and the Reason why he so earnestly asks it, and doth thus prefer it in the first place, is no doubt because he had learn'd from his *Fathers Abraham, and Isaac*, that it was this that made them so Thrive and Prosper in the World: The Reason why they were so Singularly Blessed above others, was, because GOD was with them. Thus also the good

good luck which *Joseph* had, is ascribed to the Lords being with him, *Gen.* 39. 3. and this likewise is made the cause of *Dauids* Wisdom, Courage and Success, as you may see *1 Sam.* 18. 14, 28. *2 Sam.* 5. 10. and it was a thing very useful with the *Ancients*, when they would exprels how well and happy a man was, to say, that *GOD was with him.*

And indeed how can it be but well with that Person, *whom GOD is with*, what can he want who hath him to be his Friend; He who hath the *Divine Presence* accompanying him whithersoever he goeth is Richer, and Happier, than if he had all the treasures of the world carried about with him: For *God is the Author and Fountain of all Good*, from Him every Good, and perfect Gift doth come, he can easily command any desirable thing where, when, and to whom He pleases: So that he who enjoys *GOD* hath enough, and needs not fear or care for the want of any thing, for *GOD* will be to him in stead of all things. And in having Him he may say truly as that *Philosopher* said, *Omnia mea mecum porto*, that is, *I carrie about with me all things proper*, all things necessary or requisite, either for my Support or Comfort, for *GOD* is all that. It was a vain and



proud boast of *Cesars* to the *Mariner*, who was waſting him over the *Adriatick* to *Italy*, when he perceived him ſeized with Fear and ready to turn back, *Perge audacter, ne times, Cæsarem vehis, Cæsariſque fortunam*, be not afraid you carrie with you *Cesar* and his Fortune: But truly every one that hath *GOD* with them, may with reaſon confidently ſay to himſelf, *be not afraid, ſad or dejected, Deum habes ejuſque favorem*, you have *GOD* & his favour; and having that, what cauſe can there be of Fear or Dejection? For He is Wiſdom, Power, all Goodnets, and All-ſufficiencie it ſelf, and therefore He is a True Aid, and Support, and a ſure Rock to build on, which will never fail. *Bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in Him, Pſal. 2. 12. Though I walk, ſaith David, through the valley & ſhadow of death, yet will I fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy Rod and thy Staff they comfort me. Pſal. 23. 4.* The very hopes of this ſpecial Preſence and Favour of *GOD*, did mightily chear up the *Pſalmiſt's* Spirit, when he was like to be overwhelmed with trouble, he chides and is in a chaff with himſelf, for being any wayes troubled, having this hope, *Why art thou caſt down, ſaith he. O my Soul, and why art thou diſquieted in me? Hope thou in GOD, for I ſhall yet praiſe Him, who is the beaſt*



health of my countenance and my GOD, which he repeats twice, *Psal* 42. and once, *Psal*.

43.

Many excellent Blessings and advantages follow him *whom GOD is with*. First. he is sure of Counsel and Direction which is a <sup>9<sup>th</sup> direct</sup> very necessary and desirable thing: The life of man while in this World is for the most part Dark, Intricate and full of Difficulties, 'tis like a *Labyrinth* full of perplexities, we cannot well discern the outgate; We know not what certain course to Steer for our profit and advantage: As the Prophet *Jeremiah* saith, *the way of man is not in himself, it is not in him that walketh to direct his steps*, *Jerem.* 10. 23. It is not safe to follow our own Devices, things ordinarily succeed worse when we do so; the wittiest Men have sometimes befooled themselves by leaning too much to their own Wit. No Mans Wit and Judgement can be sufficient of it self to guide him, and oft-times we are not much better of others, for they are short sighted too as well as our selves, and may mistake things as well as we: we can never therefore be sure that we are right, but when we follow the Counsel and Direction of GOD, when we are guided by him who cannot erre, because *his understanding is infinit*. But if he be with us, his Counsel will be with

us too , if he hath set his Heart upon, and chosen us for his Friend , he will also guide and instruct us, and shew us the way wherein we should walk ; *What man is he , saith David, that feareth the LORD ? him shall he teach in the way he shall choofe, Psal. 25. 12.*

But here some may ask, How doth GOD teach us ? And what way are we to expect Direction from Him ? Must we look for Revelations, Dreams, and Visions ? Indeed this was not unusual under the *Old Testament*, GOD did then very ordinarily this way manifest himself to the Patriarchs, and others his Eminent Servants ; but now it pleases Him to forbear it, at least, that so common use thereof ; and we are neither to ask nor to look for Advice and Counsel this extraordinary way. But however, if we wait on GOD , we may be confident of Direction from him, which he will communicat to us

1. by two manner of wayes : First, by the inward suggestions of his Spirit, he will not only enlighten our minds, and clear our understandings with wisdom & knowledge, so that in the general we shall be able to know what is good and right; but he will also help us to discern what is fit and proper in that particular case & circumstance wherein we stand, & will secretly incline and draw us whither his Wisdom

Wisdom sees it fit for his Glory, & our comfort. This is no idle Fancy, or Delusion, it is no piece of *Fanaticism*, or a Dream of *Enthusiastical persons*, but a certain real Truth, which all Good and Holy Persons have felt from their experience; Though these words of the Prophet, *Isa. 30. 21. Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left;* are not altogether to be restricted to an *inward inspiration*, but also to be understood that *external Voice in the Word, and by the Ministry of His Servants*: Yet Solomon seems to hold out this, when he saith, *in all thy wayes acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*, *Prov. 3. 6.* This also must be the meaning of *Elihu*, in these words, *There is a Spirit in Man, and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding*, *Job 32. 8.* This Voice is inward, and therefore not audible, or perceptible by our outward Senses, but however it may prove effectual enough for to move and sway us: “ And though as  
 “one says, this secret Directi-  
 “on of *Almighty GOD* is prin- *Halls Cont.*  
 “cipally seen in matters relat- *of the fear*  
 “ing to the good of the Soul, *of GOD.*  
 “yet it may be also found in  
 “the great and Momentous Concerns of this  
 “life

“life, which a good Man that fears GOD,  
“and begs his Direction, shall very often, if  
“not at all times find.” I hope none will be  
so injurious as to think, I intend to countenance or authorise those who rather horrid impieties and most impertinent extravagancies upon GOD, pretending they are carried thereto by a secret impulse of the Spirit. I know and would have every one to assure himself that God is never the author of what is evil, foolish or ridiculous, whatever comes from him is worthy of him, that is to say, suitable to *infinite Wisdom and Goodness*; neither doth GOD shew himself thus to any mean trivial things, but in matters of serious Importance. But because some have been so far out of purpose, as to alledge *Inspiration* for every thing, and to lay such things upon GOD, as are inconsistent with the *true notions of a Deity*, therefore to deny all such Commerce betwixt GOD and Men, or that he ever doth suggest Counsel or Advice to any in any matter, is I think very unreasonable; both these are Extremes, which I desire to shun. I doubt not but good & vertuous Persons, who commit themselves intirely to the *Divine Conduct* may, and do find themselves sometimes extraordinarily directed in Weighty and Important Cases, especially when

when their own Wit and Reason is at a stand. To this purpose I was told a remarkable Passage, when Dundee was stormed and taken by the English, in our late Revolutions; This Town being fancied foolishly to be a place of strength, and able to hold out, therefore many resorted thither, and among the rest, a certain Citizen of Edinburgh, with his Wife and Apprentise, who finding themselves sadly disappointed upon the entry of the Enemy, and sacking of the Town, were in great anguish of Spirit, and concluded themselves lost, and therefore they recommended their Souls to GOD'S Mercy; but the Woman was extraordinarily moved to go down to the street, and no entreaties of her Husband could dissuade her; when down, she first espied was one of a goodly countenance, whom she laid hold on, desiring he might go with her; When he comes to the house she falls on her knees, and said, Sir, you shall have all my goods, only save my Husband's life, which he granted, telling her withall, that Providence had directed her to him, for the last Fight he was at, he received a courtesie from a Scots Man, which made him swear, to save the first that sought quarters in this. This had not well passed betwixt them, when the enraged Souldiers thronged in upon them, and if it had not been for him, they had undoubtedly perished. This was a singular Providence, and I had it from the good

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Woman her self, who still remembers it as an instance of GOD'S kindness, and which among other things she makes the Matter of her Devout, and thankfull Acknowledgement. A second way whereby GOD directeth us, is *External*, viz: By the Wise and Happy Occurrences of *his Providence*, ordering the Circumstances of things so happily together, and making several things to fall out so well at one time, as that we are necessarily and in a manner unawares engaged into that course he Designs we should take, which will always be for our well, if we *commit our selves unto him*. Thus he made *Abrahams* Servant to light very happily upon the house of his *Masters Brethren*, and the Woman whom he should choose for his Master's Son's Wife; and thus also he directed *Jacob* to *Laban*, and *Ruth* to *Boaz*. *The steps of a good man*, saith the *Psalmist*, are ordered by the LORD, *Psal: 37: 23*: He by his *secret Providence* doth so dispose of him, and engageth him to such a conduct in his affairs, that his Good, Peace and Advantage, Credit and Comfort is carried on better than he desired, or could have expected, and by wayes and means which he could never foresee. These methods of *Divine Providence*, sometimes look not Fair and Favourable



Favourable, at the beginning they may look as if he frowned and threatned us: But the issue of them even then proves most happy, as we see in *Joseph's* case. Who so is wise as to observe the tract of his own life, and GOD'S dealings with himself & others, shall come sufficiently to understand both this *Wisdom and Loving Kindnesse of the LORD.*

But secondly, GOD'S Presence is not desirable for Counsel and Direction only, but <sup>2.</sup> upon many other accounts: nay there is <sup>It sup-  
plies our  
wants</sup> no Reason which may move us to desire any thing whatsoever, but the same should excite us to this: For either he can give the good, which we desire, or he can supplee the want thereof; He hath every thing at <sup>& gives  
efficacy  
to all or  
dinary  
mean-  
or second  
Causes</sup> His disposal, and whatever Vertue or Property any Creature hath is from Him; Neither can they produce even their most Natural effects without him, but when he pleases he can work his will without them. It is not Bread alone which preserveth our Life, but his Blessing upon it, and he can easily when he sees it fit, maintain our Natural Life, and vigour without all Food, as he did to *Moses*, and *Elijah*, and our *Saviour*. It is not Medicine nor Physick which recovers our Health, but his Blessing in our use

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of them, and even when these Means are wanting, yet his Hand is not shortned; but that he can make Whole and restore Health without them. It is not our Labour and Industry or any Endeavours we can use, which will make us compasse the ends we would be at, unless He act and concur with us; For if he give not the Blessing, if he speak not the Word, all that we can do will be in vain. *It is in vain for you, saith the Psalmist, to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows, for it is he who giveth his Beloved sleep. Psal. 127. 2.* And the Prophet Haggai tells us plainly, *that men may sow much, and yet bring in but little, they may eat, and not have enough, drink, and not be filled, they may be cloathed, and yet not warm, and earn wages but put it into a bag with holes, Hig. 1 6.* So that the Favourable Presence of GOD is desireable, both to supply what we want, and to make these things which we have useful and comfortable: He that hath GOD with him, hath not only a *Wise Friend*, but a powerful one, *who can do whatsoever he pleaseth in Heaven or in Earth*, who can oblige and command Angels and all Creatures to Serve and Minister unto him whom he loveth: Thus he caused the Ravens to feed the Prophet *Elijah*; These Fowles by Nature are more  
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ready to steal and take away then to give, and yet at the Command of GOD, they brought him Bread and Flesh in the morning, and Bread and Flesh in the evening, 1 King. 17. 6: He made the jaw bone of an Ass to afford drink unto Sampson when he was ready to faint for thirst. He caused the Heavens to rain down Bread to his People in the Wilderness, and gave them Quails in great abundance, so that even then they were fed to the full: And in a word, as there is nothing impossible unto GOD, as by his Power he can do all things whatsoever he pleaseth, so he will never fail to work Mightily and Wonderfully for those whom he loveth, when his Glory or their Good requires it, he will withhold nothing from them which their necessity or comfort calls for, and will make all things, even what seems most rough, severe, and adverse, to work together for their good, as the Apostle speaks, Rom 8. 28. and as may be easily made appear from many instances drawn from Scripture, and also other History.

Though neither *privat Persons* nor *publick States*, are now to expect to be maintained & supported by Miracles and extraordinary manifestations of the Divine Power, so much and so frequently as the Children of Israel were of old,

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yet particular Providences must not be denyed; We must not think that GOD hath now abstracted himself from the Government of the World, and from taking care of such as love and fear Him, *His eyes are still upon the Children of Men*; He interesteth himself in their Affairs, and hath the chief hand in the disposal thereof, *His eyes are still upon the Righteous, and his ears are open to their cry*; now as much as formerly, he still shews a special care of his own, and when ordinary means and methods fail, and prove ineffectual for compassing their good; He interposeth himself by Wayes and Means extraordinary, as might be made evident from the lives of some who have been eminently Holy and Pious. I doubt not but who will be at the pains to make Collections, may find many Instances almost parallel to those we read of in *Sacred Writ*; I shall mention some which may perhaps help to the remembrance of others; and that deserves the first place, which the Reverend Archbishop *Spotswood* tells us of Mr. *John Craig*; (*Spots: Hist. lib. 6. p. 462*) This eminent Person having fallen upon *Calvins Institutions* at *Pononia*, by which Means, he came not only to know the Doctrine of the *Protestants*, but also to be perswaded of the truth thereof, which being discovered, he was thereupon delated, and sent to *Rome*, where he was tryed by the *Court of Inquisition*, who condemned him to be burnt as an *Heretick*. But it pleased GOD, before the day of his Execution, to remove *Pope Paul* the 4th, whose death occasioned an uproar in the City, and several disorders amongst the rest, the Prison doors were broken open, which afforded to Mr. *Craig* the opportunity of an escape; And as he fled he met with two remarkable Instances of *Providence*; For first, *Passing through the Suburbs of Rome*, a company of *Banditti* met him, one of whom accosted him, and asked if he knew him, which Mr. *Craig* denying, the other remembered him of a *Courtesie* he formerly received at *Bononia*, and for which he not only bestowed on Mr. *Craig* some *Money*, but also conveyed him safe forth of the City, and directed him in the right way to *Bononia*, whither he intended. But not finding that good Reception there he expected; he resolved up-



on Millan, without either knowledge of the way, or the necessary means of a support for a Traveller; and while he lay penſive at the ſide of a little Brook, he received a ſecond inſtance of GOD's ſpecial Favour and Providence; for a Dog came to him with a purſe of Money in his mouth. This (as the Reverend Hiſtorian ſayes) may ſeem ſomewhat incredible; yet I cannot ſee how the truth thereof ſhould be rejected, ſeing Mr. Craig himſelf did frequently relate the ſtory; for both the holineſs of his life, frees him from all ſuſpition of Forgery, and any deſign of Impoſing upon Men; and alſo the eminent Employments he was honoured with, both before and after his Conversion to the Proteſtant Religion, ſhews him to have been far from the ſimplicity of being cheated and deluded himſelf.

It is alſo reported of D. Barnaby Potter,

That after he had paſſed the ordinary time of his Studies in the University of Oxford, he was like to have miſſed his Degrees, for want of Money to defray the Charges thereof, upon which he retired to his Cham-

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ber, and vented his grief in Prayers and Tears before GOD; and while he was at Prayer, One came knocking at the door, and required him to come and ſpeak with the Vice-Chancelour, who beſtowed on him as much Money as his preſent neceſſity called for. To theſe I ſhall ſubjoyne two or three more of latter date, which I have from very good hands. And firſt, it is reported of a worthy Divine of our Neighbour Nation, who was reſtacted, in times of the late Troubles to great Straits; And one time eſpecially, he and his Family had been a day or two without victuals; and being much moved with their looks and ſpeeches, by a ſecret ſuggeſtion of the Spirit, he commanded the Servant-Maid, to go with her basket to the Mercat, (albeit he had no money to give with her.) When ſhe came there, paſſing up and down without offering to buy any thing, ſhe was eſpyed by ſome who were drinking nigh by, They invited her in, and began to make merry with her; but ſhe not being in a diſpoſition for it; told them ſadly, "That though they were at their cups, yet ſuch a good Man her Maſter, and his



*"Family were starving".* Upon which they presently collected a sum of Money, and gave it her, with which she bought Provisions and took home with her. A *Second Instance* shall be of a Widow-Gentle-Woman in this same Countrey, who was left with several small Children, but little or nothing to maintain them with; and it being in these troublesome Times wherein there was little occasion for shewing Industry, or using honest Shifts, this made her condition the more hard: One day, to divert her from the cries of her Children, she resolved to make a visit to some person living at some distance, and as she was passing thither, GOD sent a rain, which occasioned her to step into a Milne, for fear of spoiling a new Plaid which she carried about her, where she rencountred with an Acquaintance who was making meall for the service of the Publick, and he understanding her condition, caused take home with her two loads of meal for the use of her self and family. I shall mention but one Instance more, which fell out much about the same time, and it was of another Widow Gentlewoman, who had been in a prosperous condition, and might have continued so, if it had not been for the Publick Revolutions; One time being somewhat pinched with the want both of Money and Provisions, & not willing to make her condition known, she with her Daughters went to hear Sermon, and after Sermon they fetching a walk, met with a Gentle Man, who first gave them an entertainment, and thereafter proposed Marriage to the eldest Daughter, though he knew their present difficulties; it was accepted of, and as he was able, so he actually did maintain the Mother as well as the Daughter, handsomely and creditably all her lifetime.

Those who have small sense of GOD and his Providence, will be ready enough to mock at some of these Instances, and to name others but chance, and accidental things, Hits of Fortune only But certainly considering all circumstances they cannot be looked upon as other then special and particular Providences. It is unreasonable to reject the truth of a thing, meerly because we cannot understand how it could be brought about, and it is no less unreasonable to refuse to acknowledge it to be of God, be

cause the same is not intimat to us by a Prophet, or particular Revelation. By these Instances and others which Men may gather from their Experience and Reading, it doth appear what GOD is able to do for us, and how many things he may contrive, and make to occur for relieving us out of the Straits and Troubles we fall into. But for preventing Mens mistakes, it will not be amiss to add a Caution, and it is this, That we do not think that we are only beholden to GOD and his Providence, when we meet with such extraordinary occurrences, for GOD must still be acknowledged the Author of all our Comforts, when they come to us in wayes Ordinar and Common, as well as when they are brought about by Miraculous Means and Methods, He is the Preserver of our Life and Health, when we Eat, Drink and Sleep, no less then if we should live without either of these: Our Prosperity is to be ascribed to him, when it follows our Diligence and Industry in our Employments, no less then when it falls out by Wayes and Methods extraordinary, and unthought of, to convince us of which, GOD doth sometimes blast Natural Means, for that shews the Effects doth not wholly depend upon them. And as GOD must still be acknowledged the Author of all the good we enjoy, by what ever Means or Instruments it comes to us, so we must not expect any extraordinary manifestation of his favour and Providence but in extraordinary cases, that is to say, when ordinary means and methods fail, and that such special and singular instances of the *Divine Power and goodness*, are requisite for Supporting a staggering Faith, and the engaging our selves and others, to a *cheerfull dependance upon* GOD in times of Trouble and Calamity. And though even in these cases GOD should not interpose himself thus extraordinarily on our behalf, yet there were no Reason to complain of the Want of special Care of us; we must not think they are all deserted of GOD, who do not find Miraculous help and relief upon the want of Ordinary Means, for GOD may see it as much for their Spiritual good to leave them in these

these straits and difficulties, then it would be for their temporal good to be relieved out of them, so his Love is as great the one way as the other.

But thirdly, though the *Divine Presence* should not thus signally manifest it self in procuring *External Successes and Advantages*, yet it rendereth one happy, in that, Peace and Tranquillity, Joy and Gladness doth ever flow from it, and the sense thereof. Inward Peace and Contentment and Gladness of Heart every man covets, but few rightly understand where or how it is to be had. It doth not flow from an abundance of *Temporal things* and an Affluence of *Worldly enjoyments*; one may have as much of these as heart can wish, and yet be without inward peace and Satisfaction, and however it is but a weak and brittle peace, a very slender comfort which a man can suck from these *outward and perishing enjoyments*; when these things are not considered as tokens and expressions of the *Divine Favour*, they can yield no more but *vanity and vexation of Spirit*, as *Soloman* proves, by his manifold experiences. True Peace and Joy can be built upon no other foundation then GOD Himself, it results only from the enjoyment of him, and a sense and Assurance of his Favour and Love, if he be with us, he both can and will give us a Peace, which the whole World cannot give, and which none can take from us. *Thou wilt keep him*, saith the Prophet, *in perfect Peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee*, Isa. 26. 3 when others were earnestly craving and gaping for this, and the other Worldly delight, saying, *who will shew us any good*: David prays

prayer seriously, *LORD lift up the light of thy Countenance upon us.* And he adds the reason why he desired this so much above all other things, because saith he, *Thou hast put Gladness in my heart, more then in the time that their Corn and Wine encreased, Psal. 4. 6. 7.* That is, he had more Joy from GOD'S Presence & Favour, then Men use to have in the time of Harvest when all things most abound with them. This Peace and Comfort, which GOD giveth, is not necessarily annexed to outward Plenty and Prosperity, nor alwayes attended with it: I here may be outwardly nothing but Want and Poverty, Sicknes and Distress, Trouble and Affliction, and yet even in this case, God may inwardly afford *a joy unspeakable*, and a *peace which passeth all understanding.* Wherefore Christ tells his Disciples, that *in the World they should have trouble, but in me yeshal have peace*, as if he had said be not afraid, for the trouble you meet with in the World, shall not bereave you of that peace I promise; and therefore also Solomon saith Prov. 14. 14. *That a good man shall be satisfied from himself*, that is, his satisfaction & comfort depends not on *External enjoyments*, or things without him, but he can draw it from within, through the intimat presence of GOD which doth alwaies attend him. And thus



thus you see how desiræable a thing the *Presence of GOD* is, and how happy he must needs be *whom GOD is with.*

Wherefore let all of us be so wise as to imitat *Jacob*, to seek this in the first place, and to prefer it before all things; Let us Pray to *GOD* that he may be with us, and even covenant with him, as *Jacob* doth here for this end; that in him, and by him, we may be supported. Doth not our experience tell every one of us that we are not able to sustaine our selves? and that we must be propt and upholden, or else we cannot choose but droup and fall. Man is like unto the Hop or Ivie, and such other weak Plants, which cannot stand of themselves, nor bear their own weight, but must have something to lean to: How miserable would we be if we were left to our selves, and destitute of all *external help*? how insignificant would one be if he had no other supplies, but what he could furnish from, and by himself? We have certainly no sufficiency or subsistence of our selves, and therefore we ought to cleave unto him, who only can stay and support us: If we lay the stress and comfort of our Souls upon any other thing besides *GOD*, it will be but like the Hop or ivie's clasping about a Thistle, or Nittle, for  
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want of an Oake, which brings both to the ground. Alas the generality of the World trust to the Creatures! And how foolish a thing is it? For they prove to them as the *staff of Egypt*, which the *Prophet* compares to a *broken reed*, whereon if a man lean, it will go unto his hand and pierce it, *Isa: 36: 6.* The Creatures and all things in the World of themselves are but fleeting vanities, and so must needs be but miserable comforters, they are not durable, and though they were, yet they are not sufficient, not stedable to all ends and purposes, they are so far from lessening ones vanity, that oft-times they encrease it, so far from easing his mind, or supporting his burden, that they produce some more vexation of Spirit. *Riches is a vain thing to trust to, for they make to themselves wings and fly away*; As the Wise Man observeth, and as every Man may take notice of as well as he, and though they did stay more constantly, yet could they not answer all things: What could they profit a man in the day of Wrath? could they make his bed in His Sickness, or comfort him in his Languishing Condition? Could they ease his Pain, or assuage his grief? If he were seized with the Gout or Stone, reproached in his Name, or inwardly Wounded in Spirit, And what

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may be said of them is applicable to all other things, which one may or can possess. All *outward enjoyments* serve only to blow up Men's Fancies, and to feed their Hopes while they are in Ease and Quiet, and in no difficulty; but so soon as Trouble overtaketh them, and that they fall into Straits, then these Gayeties shrink away, and discover how little strength or solidity is in them. He who confides in his Wealth, Greatness, Friends, Power, and such like, builds upon a Sandy Foundation, a Foundation which will certainly fail him when he hath most need to be Sheltred and protected. The *Psalmist* makes a supposition, *that Father and Mother may forsake us*, *Psal. 27.* and indeed sometimes they do it of their own accord, and sometimes they are constrained thereto; Friends and Acquaintances, as *Job* observed, prove like *Winter-brooks*, which flow in wet Seasons, but dry up when heat and drought comes: And then what comes of him, all whose Hope was placed in them? So who trusts to the World, trusts to no sure Friend, it never proved true to any yet, it hath deceived both its own Children, and the Children of GOD, it hath forsaken both its Adorers, and those who cared little for it, these who deserved well, and those whose

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Merits were but small; this the History of every Age, and every Nation maketh out, we need not go beyond Seas, nor look back to former Times, to learn this; we need not fetch from Antiquity the Story of *Cresus*, or *Darius*: We may prove this from the History of our own Times, and from what hath been frequently transacted in this same *British-Isle*, this Age, and the last. *Lord Cromwel* of *Essex*, the *Seymours*, *Bacon*, *Lord Verulam* *Chancellour* of *England*, and some others who had a higher Office than that of *Chancellour* amongst our selves, are eminent proofs of this vanity and uncertainty of the *World*. But there is no need of bringing single Instances, every day's observation furnisheth us with Prooves enough of this kind, so that he must be very blind, and very obdured, or very much befotted, who doth not see the vanity and folly of trusting to the world and the things thereof. He that leaneth to these only shal fall, but he that trusteth in the LORD GOD, is Blessed, for he shall be upholden: *I have set the LORD*, saith *David*, *alwayes before me*, *because he is at my right hand*; *I shall not be moved*; *Psal* 16: 8: And again, *Psal*. 46: 12: *GOD only is our refuge and strength*, *a very present help in trouble*, he is a refuge sure & stedfast which neither can nor will deceive us, and he is a

present help, because he is always ready, hard at hand, and he is not more present than he is stedable and sufficient. Wherefore as the Psalmist goes on, *We need not fear though the Earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried unto the midst of the Sea.* O L O R D of Hosts, *Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee*; for in GOD there is fulness which may fill our emptiness, in him there is sufficiency which can answer all our needs, there is no want in him, & that good which we crave, & which we are still seeking after is in him and him only. It is reported of a Souldier, who contrived a Target or Shield, after such a fashion that it served both to defend him from the darts of his Enemies, and was also useful to help him over Rivers and Waters, and that therefore he used to hugge and kiss it, calling it the true companion of a Souldier, being serviceable both upon Land and Water. This shield is no unfit Embleme, to set forth the excellency and advantage of the *Divine Presence* which serveth not for one season, but for all, and is usefull for every purpose: God is stedable both in Prosperity and Adversity, in Health and Sicknes, in Company and solitude, in Youth and old Age, at Sea and on the Land, in Peace and in War, in a Word, at all times and in all conditions;

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He can Supply all our Wants, and afford us whatever we need ; Nothing is so Difficult, but he can remove it, nothing so adverse, but he can make it advantageous; no case so perplexed, but he can resolve it, and no condition so Barren, but he can and will make it Comfortable, if he be with us : And if he once engage to be with us, he will not easily or lightly, forsake us; He will not cast us off upon surmises and suspicions, while we continue Faithfull and Dutifull to him, he will never leave us, or fail to be with us. Wherefore *Cardinal Wolfey* said truely, though very sadly for himself, *If I had served my GOD as well, and as faithfully, as I have done my King, he would never have deserted me.* And now that we may never have ground for such a complaint, that we may never have reason to bewail the folly of a vain and false Confidence, and trusting unto a deceitfull hold; and that especially when there is no time of redressing it, let us therefore, I say, presently and speedily *draw near to GOD*, let us seek him with our whole hearts, above all things, let us secure His Favour, and engage him to be with us. And then we shall tast and see better than words can unfold it, that *the LORD is good, and that*



that the Man is Blessed that trusteth in him ; That it is better to trust in the LORD, than to put confidence in Man, in Princes, or in any thing under the Sun. None that wait on him shall ever be ashamed : They trusted in thee, saith the Psalmist, and were not confounded. Be of good courage and he shall strengthen your heart. all ye that hope in the LORD, Psal. 22. 5 & 31. 24

### C H A P. III.

*Why Jacob mentioned other particulars, seeing the first Request did comprehend them, and all things else he could ask. The second Request treated of the Reasons of Jacobs Fear, and the lyableness of all Men generally to Dangers. No true Security, but in the Divine Protection; an Application of all.*

**I**N the preceeding Chapter we have spoken to Jacob's first Request, and have shewed what it is to have the LORD with one, and how large and comprehensive a Blessing it is; for in effect it contains not only the other two which follow, but all other things else, which one can reasonably desire: All the good that a man hath or which he can desire, is meerly the effect of GOD'S favourable presence. And so Jacob neede

needed have asked no more to make him Happy, but *that GOD might be with him.* But because the holding to generals, doth not sufficiently alley or dissipate our fears, this is only done when particulars are condescended on; therefore the Patriarch here as in general, he begs GOD'S Presence, so that in particular he might know it, first by his being protected from these Dangers he was liable to, and secondly by the receiving a competent supply of his Wants, which two things fall next to be considered.

The second Request *Jacob* here made, is in these words, *If he will keep me in the way that I goe;* Which words speak out, that he was both apprehensive of Dangers, and that he thought none but GOD could truly defend him from them, or deliver him out of them. And indeed, first it was no wonder that he was apprehensive of Dangers, the fear of his brother *Eſau's* wrath was one Principal Reason, why he left his Father's house, and seeing Friends and so near Relations bore him such ill-will, and were ready to do him mischief, what might he expect from Strangers, who were no wayes tied or obliged unto him? if *Abraham* and his Father *Jſaac* were in such fear of their Lives when they sojourned, that they denied

ed their Wives, calling them their Sisters, notwithstanding of their Power, and the numerous Family they had; What fear might he be in who had none with him but himself and was destitute of all help? And besides the Dangers which he might see himself exposed to through the malice and wickedness of men: *Jacob* could not but perceive innumerable others, which might befall him in the course of his *Pilgrimage*, the Wild Beasts of the Field might devour him, he might be entrapped unto Snares and Pits; out of which there was no recovery. As he passed through the Waters, they might overwhelm him; the excessive heat of the Day, or the cold frosts of the Night, might bring on heavy Sickneses and Diseases. It's impossible to reckon up all the evils which may befall a man, or to point at all the Sources from whence they flow; For we are lyable to Dangers from all the Elements, and from every part of the Creation; A thousand Mischances and Accidents may happen to put an end to our life, or to render it miserable. But our greatest and sorest enemies are those of our own Kind: Man is to Man the worst Foe: The Plague and Pestilence have killed their thousands, but Malice and Revenge ten thou-

thousands; some Vineyards and Gardens have been taken away by the inundations of Rivers, but more by Covetousness; As some Merchants and Seamen have been brought to ruine by Storms and Tempests, so others by Pirats and Theeves and the Barbarity of those to whom they run for Shelter. And thus upon many accounts it is true, *That Man that is born of a Woman, is of few dayes and full of trouble*, as Job saith; which Jacob might now understand by his Reason, as afterwards he spoke it to Pharaoh from his experience, Gen. 47. 9. And it is indeed a Truth which stands now valid and undoubted, by some five thousand years experience; For this life as a Heathen saith, *ὅτι βίος ἀλθους ἀλλὰ συμφορά*, it is not truly a Life, but a Calamity. And the Wise Son of Sirach, hath observed, *that great Travel is Created for every man, and an heavy yoke is upon the Sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their Mothers womb, till the day that they return to the Mother of all things*, Eccl. 40. 1.

Now as every Prudent Man foreseeeth the Evils and Dangers which he is lyable to, as he hath an apprehension both of the common Calamities of Mankind, and of the particular Troubles and Distresses which may befall him in his Circumstances, so he

is desirous to guard against them and shun them. And unless we know some Remedies against the Troubles we may meet with, unless we know how to prevent them, or how to remove them, or how to be eased under them, and how to be safely delivered from them, our Mindes can enjoy no true Rest nor Quiet. And what Defence can one have unless he have it from GOD? How can any think to be keeped in safety, unless He do it whom *Jacob* here calls upon? Except the LORD, saith the Psalmist, keep the City, the Watch men waketh but in vain, *Psal. 127. 1.* And the same may be said of private Persons, for if the LORD be not on our side, if he do not look to us, and take a care of us, *When men rise up against us, they should certainly swallow us up quick, when their wrath is kindled against us: certainly the Waters of trouble when they approach should overwhelm us; And the stream should go over our Soul, Psal. 124. 2, 3.* But he is secure who hath GOD for his help; I will (saith David) both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou LORD only makest me to dwell in safety, *Psal. 4. 8.* and in the former Psalm, he tells us plainly, *I laid me down and slept, I awaked for the LORD sustained me; I will not be afraid of ten thousands of People that have set themselves*



themselves against me round about. The like confidence may every one have who is interested in the Divine Favour, for he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Because thou hast made the LORD which is my refuge, even the Most High thy Habitation: There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes, they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a Stone. Thou shalt tread upon the Lyon, and Adder, the young Lyon, and the Dragon shalt thou trample under foot. Because he hath set his Love upon me, therefore will I deliver him, I will set him on high because he hath known my Name, Psal. 91. That is a great Comfort and Encouragement and a true Antidote against all Fear of Danger, or Trouble, which GOD giveth to his Servants and People; by the Prophet Isaiah, Thus saith the LORD, that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy Name, thou art mine: When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the Rivers they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, for

*I am the LORD thy GOD, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour, Isa. 43. 1, 2.*

Thus it appears what safety and security one hath whom GOD takes into his Protection, such an one as *Eliphaz* speaks, *Shal be in league with the stones of the Field, and the Beasts of the Field shall be at peace with him, Job 5. 23.* Which we are not yet to understand; as if the Children and Servants of GOD, should never be in any Danger, nor ever meet with any trial, no, there is no such thing promised, nor must it be expected: Dangers they may be in, enemies they may, they will, nay shall have: a lite of perpetuall ease is no where promised, nor yet an exemption, from Trouble altogether; yea, all temporall Promises are to be interpreted *cum exceptione Crucis*, with an attendance of Afflictions and Dangers; as our Saviour intimats to us, *Mark 10. 30.* But the thing which GOD promised to do for his Own, and which all who sincerely seek him may look for, is, that either *first* he will prevent and keep off Dangers, and such evils as are threatned by men, or which we may have caute to fear from other things; or *Secondly*, that he will abate the Severity and Rigour of them when they come, & keep us from feeling too much the smart of them,  
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by sending something or other at the same time, which may Ease and Comfort our Minds, that we may be the better able to bear it; or *thirdly*, he will procure us a Happy Issue and outgate so that we may not altogether be swallowed up by them; nay *fourthly*, that he will even make the Evils and Mischiefs threatned, & inflicted, to turn to our Good, and to prove instrumental either to our *Spiritual* or our *Temporal* advantage; That even upon this account we may have reason to rejoyce for the dayes wherein we have seen evil. This is the Nature and Manner of that Defence and Protection that we must look for from GOD; and to fortifie our Minds with the hopes of this, he hath not only given us his Promises; But laid before us several excellent examples of his *Providence*, towards his Saints and Servants in the Disposal of their Calamities and Afflictions. Thus though *Abraham* was in hazard by coming to the land of *Canaan*, for being a Stranger, the Inhabitants might have been jealous of him, and have thought it their interest to hinder his settlement, yet GOD suffered no man to do him harme. With every disaster that befell *Joseph*, GOD granted him some comfort, for he made him alwayes to find favour in the sight of those he

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was among. *Moses* was exposed to perish in the waters, but he ordained *Pharaoh's* Daughter to step in, and take him up, which occasioned him to get a more Liberal and noble Education, than what his Parents could have given him. *David* was often in danger both from Men and Beasts, yet the LORD delivered him out of them all. The three Children were cast into *Nebuchadnezzar's* fiery furnace; but he suffered not the fire to have power upon their bodies, nor, was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor had the smell of the fire passed on them; *Dan.* 3. 27. *Daniel* also was thrown into the Lions Den, but GOD sent his Angel, and shut the Lions mouths that they did him no hurt, *Chap.* 6. 22. And this same *Jacob* though he was hated by his Uncle and his Sons, and hotly pursued by them, yet when they overtook him, the LORD suffered them not to speak either good or evil against him, or to do him any manner of mischief. His Brother *Esau* also, when he heard of his coming homewards, came out with four hundred Men against him, for to cut him and his off; but when they met, in stead of Fighting, they kissed each other, and gave mutual expressions and assurance of Kindness. So that as *Solomon* observeth,

*When*

*When a Man's wayes please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him; Prov. 16. 7.* that is, He will either turn their Hatred into Love, and their Malice into Goodwill, or He will so bridle their Wrath, that they can do him no hurt, but be obliged to behave themselves as to the Outward part civilly. Of this we have many Proofs in all Ages throughout the World, but it is especially evident in the Revolution of States : for in these turns of Affairs, it hath been often seen, that some have been preserved and suffered to live in Peace, when in all Humane appearance, the contrary might been expected, yea was actually looked for by all ; because the letting them alone, was so little agreeable to the inclinations and interests of thole who had grasped the Power into their hands.

From all these therefore let us learn, *First*, when we apprehend any cause of Fear, or foresee any Evil coming, from whatsoever Airth it be, let us, I say, seek GOD as *Jacob* did here, and shelter our selves under His Protection ; we may indeed and ought to use Prudent and Ordinary Means, but take heed that our chiefest confidence be in GOD, and his Help : Let us not be taken up with any thing we our selves can do, or with  
any



any Refuge we may expect from others, as to forget to depend upon the LORD; and to call upon Him for His Aid and Assistance; *I will*, saith the Psalmist, *lift up mine eyes unto the Hills from whence cometh my help*; And that we may know what Hills these were he meant of, he addeth, *my help cometh from the LORD, which made Heaven and Earth*; *Psal. 121. 1, 2.* If thou wilt run to the LORD, he will certainly keep thee; other Keepers may fail thee, or they may be asleep when thine Enemy comes upon thee, as *Abner* was and all the Host with him, when *David* stole in upon *Saul*. But if GOD keep thee, thy Keeper will not slumber. Behold, saith the Psalmist, *He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep*, in the forecited place.

Secondly, Let us consider whither we enjoy any Safety, have we escaped any Dangers, and Evils which were threatned us? Are the Storms and Clouds dispelled which we feared? Do we at present enjoy any Ease and Quiet? If so, we may learn from what hath been said, whom we are obliged to for this, and whom we must thank, even GOD, for He and none other is the Author of all this; For whoever or whatever were the immediat Instruments, He was the *Supreme Cause and Director*. Owest thou any thing to  
the

the Favour and Good-will of Men ? It is he and he only, who turns their Hearts towards thee, it is GOD who Ordered and Contrived all these Favourable Circumstances which occasion thy present Peace and Safety : It is the LORD who is thy Keeper, He is thy Shade upon thy Right Hand ; and therefore see that thou do acknowledge it by Rendering Him thy Heartly thanks, and ascribing the Praise of all to his *Almighty Power* and *Goodness*, and take heed lest your unthankfulness make him who hath hitherto been thy Friend, to turn thy Foe, and to give thee up to the will of thine Enemies.

*Thirdly*, and lastly, Doth any man want Peace? Hath his life been still full of disquiet and trouble ? Wants he the Hearts and Good will of those he lives among ? Where ever he goeth, and whatever he doth, doth he still find Enemies and Persons who bear him Malice and Ill will? Doth one Cross and Danger come upon the back of another, so that he hath no Rest or Security ? Such an one may learn by what hath been said also where the fault lies, and who is to be blamed for it : 'tis perhaps because he hath never sought the LORD, nor studied so to order his Wayes, as to Please GOD, he hath trusted too much to himself, His Wit  
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and Industry, his Wealth, Power, or Friends, because of these he hath thought with himself, that it should be alwayes well with him, and therefore he hath not cared much for GOD ; and therefore GOD hath set himself to vex and trouble him. For as the *Eyes of the LORD are upon the Righteous, and his Ears are open unto their cry : so the Face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the Earth; Psal. 34. 15, 16.* Because David displeased the LORD in the matter of *Uriah*, therefore 'tis said, *That He raised him up many Enemies.* Let every Man therefore Try and Examine himself, let him teach his wayes, and see what sin lyeth at his door, and repent of it ; and let him turn unto the LORD, and He will cause His Face to shine Favourably upon him, happy shall he be, and it shall be well with him. Make GOD thy Friend, and He shall preserve thee from all evil : He shall preserve thy Soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth and even forevermore ; *Psal. 121. 7, 8.*

## C H A P. IV.

Jacob's *third Request* considered, in respect of himself; Though the generality of Men ask more, yet all wise Heathens and Jews have preferred this Portion to all Others. The confining our Desires to this, is shewed by severall instances to be Wise and Reasonable; and that therefore every one ought to content himself with his Competency. All Mens Competency is not the same. What is the Duty of him, who hath got his Competency? what of him who hath less? and what his, who hath more?

**J**acob's *third Request*, which he here makes, is for Maintenance, this is the last thing about which he conditions with GOD; And in this particular he was not Immodest and Exorbitant; His Desires were far from being Inordinate and unreasonable, for he craves only what was simply necessary and Requisite for the Support of his Life: He asks no more, but that GOD would give him Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on; without these he could not live, and having these he thought he had enough, all that was Needful or Sufficient, as to his Present State and

Condition. And that *Jacob* confined his Desires to this Sober Measure of Food and Raiment is the more observable, seeing we find a little before, GOD making him large Profers, and great Promises of the *whole Land* in which he was. It might been thought that he would at lest taken in GOD'S own Promise unto him, as one of the Conditions of his *Vow*, and that he should have said, "well, if thou wilt indeed give me all  
" this which Thou hast Promised, and do  
" all these things to me which Thou hast  
" spoken, and make me so Great, and so  
" Rich a Man, then *Thou shalt be my*  
" GOD": But he takes another Method, and Proceeds after another Manner, he passes by all these large Profers of Wealth and Greatness, and pitches only upon a meer simple *Sufficiency of Food and Raiment*, thinking it Improper and Unreasonable, and a peece of Immodesty for him to seek more than was necessary for him. If GOD gave more, it was an Act of His Bounty; if his Wildom and Goodness thought fit to bestow a larger Allowance, and a greater Measure of these *Temporal things*, it might be matter of Praise and Thankful acknowledgment; But it did not become him to prescribe and set down Rules to the *Sovereign*  
LORD



**LORD** of Heaven and Earth : he knew his Happiness was not tied to these outward things, and that Man's life did not consist in the abundance of these things which he possessed ; Food and Raiment was sufficient for the support of his Life , and therefore he craved no more.

The generality of the World are otherwise minded , their desires are not bounded with *Jacob's* , they are not satisfied ordinarily with the portion of Food and Raiment, however sufficient it be of it self ; they are not contented with meer necessary Supplies; but greedily covet a *Superabundance* , which is both their Folly and their Sin. We have shewed how wise and understanding the *Patriarch* was in the two former Particulars, and have proposed him as our Patern , and if we will consider it , we shall find him to be no less Wise in this , and no less Worthy of our Imitation. Wherefore let us set this holy Mans Example before us , and let us moderate our Desires after the things of this Life , according to this Measure and Model , which he gives and sets to himself , and to which all Wise Men have ever proportioned their Desires. Thus *Agur* prayed , *Give me neither Poverty , nor Riches : feed me with food Convenient for me ;* Prov. 30. 8.

30: 8. And as *Solomon* Contemned Riches and much Wealth so far, as that he would not ask them from GOD when he had it in his choice what to ask, so he hath Advised us to Despise them, and not to seek after them. *Labour not*, saith he, *to be rich; Cease from thine own Wisdom*; Prov: 23: 4. As if he had said, thou art not wise, thou understands not they self sufficiently, if thou think it a fine or a good thing to be Rich, and to have great abundance. *St. Paul* judged this, which *Jacob* here required, sufficient matter of Contentment, *having food and raiment*, saith he, *Let us be therewith content*; 1. Tim: 6: 8. And we might instance even in many Heathens, who sought no more than a meer Competency, and in their Judgement preferred that to the greatest affluence of Worldly Wealth, and Grandeur. *Horace* calls this, *Auream mediocritatem*, a Golden Competency, because it is the best of Conditions; and elsewhere he saith,

---- *Bene est mi Deus obtulit*

*Parca, quod satis est, manu.*

---Thrice happy he, to whom the  
wise indulgency of Heaven,

*With sparing hand, but just enough hath given.*

*Plutarch* in his Banquet of the seven Wise Men,  
brings

brings in this Question, *Which is the happiest Family ?* Which one of the Sages answers thus, *Where Necessaries are not wanting, and Superfluities are not sought.* How much Seneca speaks in the commendation of a Moderate State, and how much in the contempt of Riches, is known to all who have seen any thing of his Writings; and the following lines speak out his sentiments thereof,

*Fata si liceat mihi*

*Fingere arbitrio meo, &c.*

*Tuta me media vebat*

*Rita decurrens via.*

*If all my Wishes, I could have*

*I for Felicity,*

*No other thing would crave*

*then Mediocrity.*

It is a saying of Cicero, in his book, *de Officiis*, *Nihil est tam angusti animi tamque parvi quam amare divitias*, that is, Nothing doth more bewray ignorance, & meanness of Spirit, than the love of Riches. And certainly to crave and be desirous of more than what is Competent for the Maintenance and Support of our Lives, is both inconsistent with that Dependence & Subjection we owe GOD, and doth also bespeak a great deal of Vanity, Folly and Inconsiderateness.

GOD who is the great Master and Governour

nour of the World, he Allowes and Commands, that we wait upon Him for the necessary Supplies of our Life; yea, this much we may lawfully seek from Him. Wherefore our *Saviour* in that Prayer which he prescribed his *Disciples*, he taught us to Pray for *our daily bread*, comprehending under that all other necessary Supplies; According to that of *St. Augustine*, *quando rogamus panem quotidianum, quicquid nobis propter carnem nostrum necessarium est. rogamus*; that is. when we aske our *Daylie Bread*, we also aske all other things necessary for the Preservation and Comfort of our Lives; And as it becomes us to pray for this, that we may own and shew our Dependence upon *GOD*; so it becomes us to rest satisfied with the seeking of it, and to be contented when we have gotten it: To aske and be desirous of more, is but immodesty and doth bewray an *Untuly* and *Stubborn* and *Unreasonable* Disposition; As the holy Father we just now mentioned saith, “Food and Raiment is necessary, without it we cannot live; “there is no immodesty in seeking it; But “it is impudency to ask Riches, it is one thing “to ask, what may nourish our *Pride* and “*Vanity*, and another thing to seek only “what is proper for the sustenance of our life.

*Aliud*

*"Aliud est unde superbiat aliud unde vivat".*

When a Servant hath received his Allowance, is sufficiently Fed and Cloathed, what an insolency is it for him to desire his Master to give Superfluities over and above what he needs, meerly to please his Fancy, or to gratifie his Humour? It is not Discretion to set down Measures, and to prescribe what should be given, where nothing is due, Now GOD owes us nothing, He is not obliged to give us any thing at all: But only because we are his Creatures, he is Ready and Willing to preserve us, and hath in some sense obliged Himself to Maintaine and Cherish that Life he hath given, which yet gives no Allowance to seek for the satisfying of our unreasonable, and unsatiable Appetites. *Necessaries* we may call for but *Superabundance* and more than enough, we ought not; seeing we Live meerly by the Bounty of *Almighty GOD*, we ought not to carve for our Selves, but the Alms and Portion which He bestowes we should take Thankfully, and sit down Contentedly therewith. It is observed that though we have several other failings of the Servants of GOD mentioned in Scripture, yet there is not one instance of an immoderate desire for *Temporall Goods* in any one of

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them



them. For as the excessive Love hereof is inconsistent with the true Love of GOD, so the express desire of them is arrogant Presumption which the Servants of GOD are ever carefull to keep themselves free of.

And as it is Immodesty and Undiscretion in regard of GOD to be desirous of more than a *Competency*, then what is sufficient to maintain us in our State and Condition: So really it is an unreasonable and vain thing in it self. To what purpose is it to seek more than that we stand in need of? All that is over and above is perfectly vain, useless, and unreasonable; And it is no real, but an imaginary Satisfaction only which a Man can promise to himself thereby. If one keep the Wealth by him which he stands not in need of, if he hoord it up in his Chests and Coffers, and put it to no use, what is he the better of it? What doth it really signifie more to him, than if it were yet an hundred fathom under Ground in the Bowels of the Earth; except that he hath a great dale of Care, Fear, Anxiety, and Trouble which he would want, if it were still there?

*Fond Man! what good or beauty can be found?  
In heaps of Treasure buried under ground?*

*Which*

*Which rather then diminish't, e're to see,  
Thou wouldst thy self too buried with them be ;  
And what's the difference, is't not quite as bad,  
Never to use, as never to have had.*

*Cowley.*

*Dionysius the Elder*, understanding a certain Citizen had Gold hid in his house, he commanded it to be brought to him ; But afterwards when the same Person went to sojourn in another City, and did Trade with a little which he had stolen away ; *Dionysius* sent for him, and restored him all back again , because he began to use his Wealth, and to leave off the rendring an useful thing useless ; Thereby shewing that the true use of Money is not to hoord it up, but to lay it out in such and such wayes as tend to the *Publick good* ;

----- *Surely use alone,  
Makes Money not a contemptible stone.*

*Herbert.*

Again , if one should resolve to use and spend it on his Family and House keeping, if a Man design to keep a great Retinue, and to live up sutable to the Abundance which he possesseth ; Yet even in that case, there is more of Fancy than Solid Pleasure and Satisfaction ; *When goods encrease , saith Solomon, they are encreased that eat them : and*

*what good is there to the Owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes; Eccl. 5. 11. Which truly is a very small and vain good; Let a Man have never so much of this World, yet-even in that abundance his Natural necessities are not better supplied, than if he had only a simple competency; of all his Dishes, he fills but one Belly, & of all his fair Houles, and Rich furnished Rooms, he can lodge but in one at once, and neither the Variety, nor the Fineness and Delicacy of the things he enjoys, doth secure from Death, or Sicknes, and Diseases, and the other incumbrances of our Life. Mans life, saith our Saviour, consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth; Luke 12. 15. That is, a Man's Life is not prolonged thereby, he must not necessarily live as long as he hath any thing to spend, even though he have much goods laid up for many years, his Soul may be very soon required of him, as the Parable there sheweth. And as the Abundance maketh not our Life the longer, so neither much the better. True Pleasure and Contentment doth not alwayes follow great Measures of this Worlds goods; he that hath little, and but a moderate competency, passeth his dayes ordinarily more Quietly and Contentedly, than he that hath much Riches,*  
and

and his sleep is alwayes sounder. The sweetest sleep doth not necessarily follow Beds of Down, and Pillows of Silk. *The sleep, saith Solomon, of a labouring Man is sweet, whither he eat little or much; but the abundance of the Rich will not suffer him to sleep; Eccl: 5: 12.* Our Natures may be well enough supplied with little, *Natura paucis contenta*, and ordinarily when that little and moderate competency is only enjoyed, it affordeth greater Pleasure, and more Satisfaction than Excess and Abundance. What is superfluous and redundant commonly turns to our Hurt and Damage, breeds Surfeitings and Loathings, Pains and Diseales, and doth Violence even to our *Natural Complexions*, and so tendeth to the *shortning of our dayes*.

But farther a State of Mediocrity or Competency proportioned unto our Necessities is far more desirable than Great or Superfluous Abundance, because this condition is more safe and secure, and less subject to changes and alterations. "A man in this State (as is well expressed by the Excellent Lord *Hales* Con-Justice *Hales*) will not be so *temp. part first* readily disquieted through *pag. 181.* the malice and envy of others; as he who is in an Estate of External Grandeur,

"deur, Wealth, and Power; For he  
 "who is in the former State, hath nothing  
 "that others do covet or desire, but the lat-  
 "ter hath gotten the Golden Ball that the  
 "generalitv of mankind are fond to have,  
 "and restless till they have gotten it, which  
 "makes the Man's estate unquiet and un-  
 "safe, because he hath many competitors  
 "for what he enjoys, which are continual-  
 "ly endeavouring to trip up his Heels.  
 "Just as we see when a Bird hath gotten a  
 "booty or prey, all other birds of prey are  
 "following and catching after it, and ever  
 "molesting him that hath it. He that en-  
 "joys much either of Honour or Wealth  
 "or Power is the *object of the envy of other men*,  
 "which is a busie, restless, pernicious Humor,  
 "and ever picking Quarrels and finding  
 "Faults, and studying and endeavouring the  
 "ruine of its object. Whereas a *State of Me-*  
 "*diocrity* is a state of Quietness, and free fr m  
 "the Assaults and Shafts of this Pestilent  
 "Companion". The great Difference of  
 these *two states* may be well seen in *Jacob* the  
 Person in the Text, for whilst he had nothing  
 but his Staff, his *Bread to eat*, and his *Raiment*  
*to put on*; the necessary supplies of Nature,  
 he was in great Quiet and Safety; but so  
 soon as Wealth encreased upon him, his  
 Uncle



Uncle and his Sons first envied him, and then plott'd against him, so that he saw no other Security but to fly for it. And how many such instances may we collect from the present Age, and even too within this *Ile*? How many lived Happily and Contentedly until they were rais'd unto places of Dignity and Advantageous Emolument? How hath this engaged them into a life of Strife and Debate? they have been so far from Augmenting even their temporal *happiness*, that many have los'd it altogether, their Enemies not being content to take away what was so much envied by their ambition and covetousness, unless they also reduced them to circumstances worse than their former, that they might not be in a capacity of revenging themselves

Besides all this, such a competent Condition as we are speaking of, is of it self by far perferrable to any other, because there is less care and trouble attending it, and it affords a man time and leisure for acquiring knowledge & vertue, and for minding and waiting upon the Great Concerns of another World. He that either wants what he stands in need of, or hath much more, both of them are often necessitat to be a drudge to this life: all their thoughts

thoughts, & cares, are for the most part about the World, and the things of the World, which debaseth a man very much, and is a stouping of him far below the designe of his Creation, he was created for the enjoyment of GOD, for converse with his *Maker*, and the Exercise of *Divine vertues*, which both a state of want and a state of superfluity and abundance doth very much hinder and divert him from. This made *Agur* pray against both, *give me*, saith he, *neither poverty nor riches; not Riches, lest I be full and deny thee, and say, who is the LORD* Nor yet poverty, *lest I put forth my hand and steal, and take the Name of my GOD in vain.* There be a great many Temptations in both States, but more in a state of plenty and fulness, than in want. *They that will be rich*, saith S. Paul, *fall into a temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtfull Luts, which drown men in Destruction and Perdition.* 1 Tim: 6. 9. This *Crates* that Pagan Philosopher had some sense of, when he threw his money into the Sea, declaring, *that he would drown it, lest it should drown him*; he might indeed have found many better and more Vertues Wayes of disposing it, for preventing the mischief thereof; But however this shews, that even *Natural Wisdom* teacheth that there be  
more

more inconveniency in Having, then in Wanting riches. "Of all Conditions in the World (saith *Ibid pag.* "that excellent Personage for- 180.  
"merly mentioned ) a redundant and over plentiful condition is most  
"subject to the most Dangerous and Pernicious Temptations in the World ; As  
"namely forgetfulness of GOD ; Self-Dependence , Pride, Insolence, Oppression ,  
"Injustice, Unquietness of Mind, Excess, "Luxury, Intemperance, contempt of others.  
"I have very often, saith he, known these  
"persons that have carried themselves steadily, and commendably in a Condition of Mediocrity ; nay have been able  
"to bear with Victory the shocks of these  
"Temptations that arise from want and Poverty : yet when in the late times being  
"advanced to Wealth, Power, and Command, they were lost, and could not  
"bear the Temptations that attended Grandeur, Wealth, and Power. So that the sun  
"of wealth and Prosperity quickly disrobed them of that mantle of Innocence, Piety,  
"and vertue that they kept about them  
"against the Stormes of Wants and necessities". And perhaps there be few, but from  
our experience we may learn and observe

the like. Though Men little regard it, yet certainly it merits our consideration, seeing it was spoken by our Saviour, *Verily, verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom, of Heaven; and again, I say unto you, it is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle, then for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of GOD, Mat. 19.*

Thus you see what Reason and Wisdom there is in this Request of *Jacob's*, and how much it doth really concern us to bound & measure our Desires thereto. Food and Raiment we may and ought to seek, because without this, we cannot live conveniently and comfortably; but to ask more, as it is Insolent and Immodest in regard of GOD, so it is Vain and Unreasonable in it self, unsafe in respect of others, and very Dangerous for our selves.

*Quod nimium est fugito, parvo gaudere memento  
Tuta magis est puppis, modico quæ flumine fertur,  
Despice divitias si vis animo esse beatus.*

*Quas qui suspiciunt mendicant semper avari.*

*Fly what 's too great, be with small things content,  
That Ship's most safe to which small gales are sent;  
Would't happy be? For wealth do not much care,  
Who it affect, Beggars and greedy are.*

Wherefore let every one in the first place sit down and wisely consider what is their com-

competency, their convenient Food, as *Agur* terms it; for it is certain that this varies according to the various conditions of Men: Some require more and some less, the same measure doth not fit all; a single Man needs not so much as he who hath a Family, a Privat Person so much as a Publick, one in a low Condition, as he of better Rank and Quality, every Man's Necessities are according to his Station, Calling, and Circumstances; and therefore as *Zeba* and *Zalmunna* said to *Gideon*, *as is the man, so is his strength*; so we may say in this Case, *as is the Man so is his competency*. But whatever it be, having found it, let us Humbly and Modestly ask it of GOD as *Jacob* doth here, and let us not think to obtain it without him, for unless he give it, we cannot come by it; *It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows, for so he giveth his beloved sleep*, *Psal. 127*. If the eyes of the inferiour Creatures, as the *Psalmist* tells us, *do all waite upon GOD, that he may give them their meat in due Season*; how much more doth this become us, to whom he hath given reason and understanding, by which we know that our food and raiment are his peculiar gifts; It is true they who seek not GOD, may come to have these

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things;



things; For wee see the wicked and ungodly have them usually in abundance: But then they cannot be considered as tokens of Gods love, as effects of his special favor and particular care, and as pledges of better things in the life to come, and so they lose their best savour, they want that which would give them the sweetest taste. It is the love of the giver which puts a value upon the Gift, and so our chief delight in these temporal things should be, because they come from GOD, and witness his favour for us; otherwise they can afford but a Mean and brutish Satisfaction, no greater then what an Ox or Horse hath over their fodder. Now, who waite not upon GOD, though they have their sustenance & more, yet it is not given them as a Blessing, they have reason rather to look upon it as a Curse, that they may be among those whose portion is in this life only. *Omnia temporalia Dei munera sunt, ne putetis quod aliquis illa possit dare nisi unus Deus.* August: And as we should ask our necessary sustenance, as it becomes us to seek our dole and allowance, so let us be caretull not to offend him by craving arrogantly more for which we have neither Precept, nor yet any Patern of any wise or holy Man in all the Scripture. But we must not content our selves to seek  
 this

this by Prayer only, it becometh us to seek it, and also to wait upon GOD for it, in the use of these prudent lawfull and ordinary Means which his Providence hath appointed; for 'tis this way ordinarily that he gives it, and by which we must expect it. Prayer ought to be used, but it must not be wholly rested in; When the LORD directs us to Pray for our *dayly bread*, the meaning is not, that GOD may give it without our own *endeavours*; we do not Pray that GOD may Feed, and Cloath us by a *miracle*, as he did the Prophet *Elijah* and the children of *Israel* in the Wilderness: But only that he would blesse our diligence and industry in those honest Courses which his *Wise Providence* hath Ordained and Established, that thereby we may procure the means of our *subsistence* and the *comforts of our lives*. That sentence which GOD past upon Man after the fall, stands yet unrepealed, *In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread*; This is still in force it binds all, and it is in the observance hereof, that we are to expect our necessary Maintenance and Support. Only in following these *Ordinary means and Methods*, we ought to beware of all *immoderate care, anxiety and Solitude*, taking no thought what we should eat, or what we should drink, or wherewithall we shall

*shall be clothed ; For our Heavenly Father who feeds the Fowles of the Air , and provides for the Beasts of the Field, and cloathes the Lillies will not suffer us his Children who are Created after his Image, to want the necessarie of our life. He knows before hand what things we need , and if we trust in Him he will not fail to bestow them. The young Lion saith the Psalmist , may lack and suffer hunger but they that fear the LORD, shall not want any good thing ; Psal: 34.*

In the next place, it will be fit and proper that we consider our present State and Condition , and what be those things which GOD hath already bestowed on us, that accordingly we may know how to behave and demean our selves suitably.

First, If GOD hath blessed us with a competency , if we find that we have a sufficient Supply of our Wants , and a convenient Support and Maintenance in our present Condition , then we ought to be well Contented , and also should be very thankfull to GOD who is the author thereof: we ought to Bless and Praise Him , who hath put us into such a convenient Condition , as is every wise Mans choice , and wherein there is such Freedom from Cares and Anxieties, Molestations and Envyings of others, which

which gives such Peace and security, and allowes Time and Opportunity for improving our selves in Vertue and Wisdom, and acquainting our selves with GOD here, that wee may enjoy him for ever hereafter. The Man is truly Happy who is in this case, and may say with *David*, *the lines art fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea I have a Goodly heritage, therefore I will Bless the LORD;*&c. Psal: 16. 6. and 7.

But secondly some will perhaps say, that they have not a Competency as yet, that they are so far from having enough, that they are in *Wants, Straits, & Difficulties*, and indeed it may be so; however let them take heed that they mistake not their case and Condition; perhaps you may call that a State of Want which is really a Competency; you may perhaps judge that Poverty, which some will look upon as Fulness; and every Reasonable Man will count sufficient: The Table you despise, some would think a feast, the cloathes you disdain to wear, another would be vain of, that which you call a trouble and Mortification, sober and Rational Persons would not complain of, but esteem it Easie and Comfortable, and then it is only needfull to rectify thy Judgement, and to take up a true estimate of things for to know  
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the Happiness and Sufficiency of thy present Lot. For to be informed of the inconvenience of our present Condition, we must not proceed by those Measures which Pride, and Vanity, and Luxury, and Voluptuousness, and corrupt Customs lay down, but we must examine and consider things according to their true Nature and Use, and as Sober and Modest Reason doth dictate. *Magis nos docere debet iudicium veritatis, quam præiudicium consuetudinis.* If we have wholesome Food, though it be not Rare, Costly or Delicious, if we have Cloaths that are Useful and Comely, though they be not Gaudy and Splendid, and for great Ostentation, if we have as much as serve to relieve our *present necessities*, and to afford us Necessary and Convenient Accommodation, though not for Lavish and Prodigal Spending, or so much as others have, or equal to what our Ancestours enjoyed, in this case we have no Reason to complain. And if we do complain in these Circumstances we shall never be satisfied in any, he that is not contented with a Moderate and Reasonable Competency will never think the greatest Abundance enough; when Mens desires once go beyond their necessities, no measure of Wealth or Riches can stay them; *Crescit amor*



*amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit* : And Solomon tells us, *he that loveth Silver, viz. with an immoderate Love, shall not be satisfied with Silver; nor he that loveth abundance with Increase, Eccl. 5. 10.* The best and readiest way to become Rich is not to seek to increase our Substance, but to Moderate and Abridge our Desires. The true way to fill a leaking Vessel is not to carry it to the Ocean or some great River, but to stop the leaks, for so long as they continue, it were no more possible to fill it at the Ocean, then at some small Rivolet, even so if we would draw Contentment and Satisfaction from our present State and Condition, we must not let our Desires reach farther then what is Just and Equitable, otherwise the whole World will not be able to content or satiate them.

But suppose that it shall be found even by the narrowest Measures, that thou art in an Estate of Want, and hast not a Sufficiency answerable to thy Necessities; in this case indeed thou hast not full matter of Contentment, but however thou must Labour to support thy self with Patience, considering that this is the Lot which the *All wise GOD* hath given thee to whom thou owest an intire Submission, and who may have appointed

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pointed this, as to punish thy former Follies and Sins, so likewise both to further thy greater good and also to prevent greater mischiefs and evils which might have betallen thee. And though thou mayest very lawfully seek to be out of this present *Necessitous Condition*, (providing it be by Lawfull Means and Moderat Cares and Endeavours) yet thou hast no reason to Fret and Repine thereat: For consider, that as thy *Estate is little here, so thy account shall be the less hereafter*, and thou art also at present delivered from many Dangerous Temptations, which perhaps thou couldst not well have resisted, and art rid of many Incumbrances and Intanglements which would either have hindered thy Progress in Vertue and H<sup>u</sup>manities altogether, or else rendered it very difficult. Remember also that even in this State there are fair and good Opportunities of winning Heaven and Eternal Life, as well as in any other, and if that be sufficiently secured, it's the less matter what come of other things: if we be sure to be happy hereafter, we need not be much concerned how we fare here. And 'tis certain that neither our Praise nor our Reward depends upon any *external condition* of this World, but upon our living Vertuously and Uprightly, Devoutly and Piously

Piously in whatsoever Condition GOD puts us. The state of Man in this World may be compared to a play, whereof we all are the Actors; and as in a play it is of no great moment, what part a Man act; providing he act the part allotted him handsomely, and well, for he that acts the part of a Servant or Clown rightly, gets as much Praise and Reward as he who plays the part of a Prince: So let it not trouble thee, whither this or the other Condition hath fallen into thy share, whither GOD hath given thee this or the other Station to shew thy self in, but whatever it be, do thou what becomes thee, walk suitably to thy place and Circumstances, see that thou carry thy self so as that GOD may be Glorified, thy self Praised. and others Edified, and when the Play is done, when this Life is ended, great shall be thy Reward.

Lastly if thou find that GOD hath put thee into an Estate of Redundance & Plenty so that besides the liberal supplies of thy Necessities thou hast much considerably over and above; if so, then thou owest first great thanks to GOD for his Bounty and Liberality to thee, whilst many others in the World are Pinched and Strained: Thou  
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broughtest as little into the World with thee as they did, and therefore it the *Divine Providence* had not made the difference and kept it up, thou shouldest have felt their Poverty, and they might have enjoyed thy present Plenty. Make therefore an thankful Acknowledgement unto GOD'S Goodness, as this *Jacob* did afterwards upon the like Consideration, O GOD, said he, *I am not Worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant, for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands; Gen. 32. 9: 10.*

But as thou art thus obliged to Gratitude and Thankfulness, so in the next place you will do well to consider, what Warri-ness and Circumspection and Watchfulness thy present condition requires and calls for. A Plentifull State is Difficult and Dangerous it produceth many and strong Temptations, so that thou hast need to take heed to thy self that thou be not overcome; keep a strict Watch and Guard over all thy wayes, that thou wax not Proud and Wanton, that thou be not enlured to Rioting and Excess, that thou oppress not thy Interiours: Let not thy Abundance make thee Forgetfull of GOD, or keep thee from the thoughts of another

another World, for if these be the effects and Consequences of thy Plentifull Condition, it is a Curse and not a Blessing, and it hath brought thee to utter Ruine and Destruction, if thou thus abuse thy Plenty, thou shalt one day pay sa lly for it; and the more thou Satiats thy self here, the greater shall be thy Penury and Want hereafter: Then thou shalt feel the folly of Abusing Plenty after this sort, and shalt be Glad to have one sent that he may *Dip the tip of his finger in water to cool thy tongue*, but it shall not be granted; in steed of this thou shalt hear, Son, *Remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things*; Luk: 16. 25. Now he that would not have such a Comfortless Memorandum to be given unto him in the other World, let him Remember to walk warri-ly in this, let him not give himself to Pride and Luxury and Voluptuousness, but let him Exercise himself to Godliness, and keep that charge which the Apostle gives, and which he commands all Pastours of the Church to give them that are Rich in this World, *that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for them-*



*themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life; 1.*

Tim. 6. 17. Remember that thou art no more then a Steward, of what more then sufficiently serves thy self, and that thou must be accountable for it to him who trusteth thee with it, not that it might ly idly by the, or that thou mightest abuse it to the Maintenance of Impiety and Profaneness; But he gave it thee that thou mightest thereby shew thy Wisdom, manifest thy Vertue, glorifie his Name, and profite Mankind; and especially to distribute to the Necessities of those that want. We mistake it very much if we think GOD is so fond upon one sort of men more then another; that he giveth in abundance to the one for to feed, and Pamper their Lusts to the full, and is content in the mean time that others starve; no certainly, GOD can be accused of no such partiality; but as His Wisdom hath not thought fit to make an equal Distribution of this Worlds Wealth among Men, so the Reason why he hath given to one, and withholden from another, is, that the one might learn the Vertue of Patience, and the other exercise Charity, and that by such mutuall Giving and Receiving, Love, Unity and Concord may be preserved, and kept up  
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in the World. *Quando Dominus Pauperem facit, Divites probat,* saith the Father, *when GOD maketh one Poor, it is to try the Rich,* 'tis to put them to a proof of their love to Him, and of their Kindness to their Brethren. He therefore who keeps all to himself, or imploies it only for his own proper use, is an unjust Steward, and doth pervert GOD'S Design in giving it him. *Non solum Avarus est qui rapit aliena, sed ille Avarus est qui cupide servat sua,* that is, *He is not only Covetous and Unjust who robbeth others, but he also who basely keeps his own, without Communicating to others; who eateth his morsels alone, as Job speaks, without calling the Stranger and Needy to share with him.* There is no evil in Rich Mens eating the Fat, and Drinking the Sweet, providing they find portions to them, for whom nothing is prepared: But if this be omitted they abuse the good Creatures of GOD committed to their Custody, and are as unjust as that Steward, who feeds highly himself, but lets his Fellow Servants starve. He only is a Wise and Faithful Steward, who is Liberal and Charitable of those Goods which GOD hath given him, who feeds the hungry, cloaths the naked, visits the Sick; and such as are in prison, and Administers to them. And as by a Wise and Charitable

Charitable Distribution of the *Mammon* of Unrighteousness, he purchaseth to himself Love and a Veracious Commendation in this World, so he maketh to himself *Friends that never die*; but who, when he removeth hence, will receive him into their everlasting Habitations? *Luke 16. 9.* We will not insist farther on this Point at present, because we will have occasion to Discourse thereon afterwards in the *Second Part*; And therefore we shall now conclude with those words of our Saviour, often used, *He that hath ears to hear let him hear*; He that is concerned let him remember and take notice of this and do in like manner, that it may be well with him, that he may escape the Danger of Riches, and not through them make Shipwreck of his Salvation: But notwithstanding of these Impediments and Difficulties which they throw in his way, he may obtain a safe Arrival into that Heavenly *Canaan* which is above.

CHAP.

## C H A P. V.

*Of the end which Jacob proposed to himself in these Requests. His Condition here a fit Embleme to represent the Present State of Mankind; All Men considered as Pilgrims and Sojourners both in a Literal and Moral Sense. The Patriarchs lived in expectation of a Future State; The certaintie of this State held forth, and some account thereof given. The Conclusion of this first part.*

**T**HE last Particular to be taken notice of in this Part of *Jacob's Vow*, is the end which he proposed to himself, in asking those things from GOD, viz. *that he might come back to his Father's house in peace*; And hereby the Reasonableness and Equitie of his Requests will farther appear; he was at this time going a Pilgrimage, travelling a to *Forreigne Countrey*, where he intended not to take up a constant Residence; whatever he might meet with: he resolved only to Sojourn for sometime, and then to return to his Father's house, the place of his Birth and Education



cation. He Designed to take up his rest and settled Abode, no other where then his Father's house, and this *Land of Promise* he preferred to Kingdoms, and the best Inheritance else where. And therefore it was that he now asked no more then what was Sutable, and Necessarie to his Present State, and Condition of a Pilgrim, and Traveller.

The present Condition of this *Patriarch*, is a fit and proper Embleme to hold forth the Nature and Qualitie of Man's Life, while in this World; for what *Jacob* was at this time, all Men may be said to be, during their abode upon Earth. This same *Jacob* when he appeared before *Pharaoh* in *Egypt*, calls his whole Life *A Pilgrimage*, without respecting this particular Journey which he made to *Mesopotamia*; And he sayes the same of the Life of his Fathers, *The dayes, saith he, of the years of my Pilgrimage, are an hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the dayes of the years of my life been, And have not attained unto the dayes of the years of the life of my Fathers, in the dayes of their Pilgrimage; Gen: 47: 9: David also saith the same, Psal. 39. 12. I am a stranger with thee, and a Sojourner as all my Fathers were; And again, he saith plainly, I am a stranger*  
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*n the earth*, Pſal. 119. 19. And indeed all men while they are upon Earth, are to be considered only as Strangers and Sojourners. Our very Life here is nothing else but a Pilgrimage, and that both in a Literal and Moral Sense. It holds even for the most part true Literally, for there is no settled Condition here: like Travellers we are still in a continuall motion, flitting up and down; what do we else but traverse the World, and go from one place to another? He is truly a singular person who hath never been from his Mothers knee, nor seen any other place then that of his Birth, nor conversed with any other Men then his particular Friends and Relations, and thole he was Born and Bred amongst. The *secret Providence* of GOD, the pursuing our Callings, the desire of a Livelyhood and Subsistance, the seeking out greater Peace and Security, drive us with *Jacob* from our *Father's house*. We are hereby often constrained to a wandering Courſe of Life, which expoſes us alſo to Wind and Weather, and all the Incommodities which Travellers meet with: Men cannot almoſt by any Means, or the greateſt Foreſight, ſecure to themſelves a fixed Station in this World, but are either by their choice willingly, or through neceſſity chang-

ing their Habitations and Employments. When we think our selves most secure, and are building to our selves Houses and Tabernacles of Residence, hoping that here we shall fix and settle, behold, presently some thing or other occurs which defeats our Design, and alters our Purpose, and constrains us to make Tryal of some State and Condition we little thought upon. And thus all Men almost from their own Experience, may say, *that their Life and Condition here is like that of a Traveller and Pilgrime.*

But however true it hold in a *Literal sense*, it is alwayes *Morally true*, that Man while upon Earth is but a Sojourner and Stranger whatever be his Lot and Portion. For *first*, GOD hath not intended us a Sure and Lasting *Abode* here, he hath resolved not to suffer us to make any long or considerable stay on the Earth, he designs only that we should take a short view of things, take a turn or two and then remove hence. Man's Life here is but of *few days*, even those who attain to the greatest number of years, their life if compared to *Eternity*, is but a *span long*; and seeing that thus we have but so short and so uncertain Possession of this World, our stay therein cannot

not be counted other, then a *Sojourning*. It cannot be said properly that we *dwell here*, but only that we *lodge*; For we are not *true Inhabitants*, but only *way-faring Men*, who take a Nights Lodging and afterwards are gone. We can call no place here our *Home*, we never go *Home* till we descend into the Grave, and pass over into the other World; that is our *Home*, because there is no changing of it, nor flitting from it.

*Secondly*, As we are to account our selves *Sojourners*, because our Life is short, so *Strangers*, because of the want of an agreeable Habitation. All Creatures have a proper Element, whither also their Natural Propensitie inclines them; that is the Proper and Natural Element of any Being which is suitable to its Nature and Quality, and where it finds Rest and Ease; but on the contrary, that is Improper and Unnatural which agrees not with its Disposition, and where it lives with Difficultie, and in much pain. Thus the Air is an improper Element for Fishes, as the Water for Fowls, and Terrestrial Creatures; and consequently this World is not the proper place and habitation of Spirits, and Rational Beings: And therefore also not of Men, seeing we are of this Order by our *better part*. The  
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Creatures to be met with here below , are not capable of Converse with us ; and all the Delights and Enjoyments here can only gratifie the Body , and be profitable for chearing those *frail Tabernacles we carry about with us* ; But 'tis little service they can do the Soul, and therefore however proper these *lower Regions* may be for Bodies , yet certainly our Souls soar higher, and aspire after a Happiness beyond what is to be found here. Wherefore whiles we are upon Earth, we may be truly called *Exiles* , and said to suffer *Banishment*, for Heaven only is our *Native Soyle* , it is in *yonder Regions* above that we can only expect to find a *sutable Habitation* and *abode*. The very Heathens had this Sentiment, they accounted their Stay here a *perfect banishment* , and esteemed the Body the Prison, which detained the Soul from its *Native Countrey*. So Anaxagoras being asked, *whither he had any Care or Concernments for his Countrey*; because he troubled not himself with the Publick Affairs and Transactions. His answer was , GOD forbid that it should be otherwise, indeed my mind is greatly towards my Countrey, pointing with his finger to Heaven. That is a Man's Home where his Friends and Relations live, where his Wealth and Estate, and the Possessions wherein his Happiness

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lyes are reserved, & where his Heart and Affections are placed; And so Heaven is and should be only our *Home*. Thither should we aim, for our Souls are descended thence, there GOD our *Father* liveth, and JESUS CHRIST our *elder Brother*; and *Angels* and *Seraphims*, and the *Spirits of just Men made perfect*; our friends and Companions, and Fellow-Citizens; and there be the Treasures of our Happiness: That Good which our Souls crave and seek after is shut up there, and no where else. This World affords no perfect Contentment, or true solid Happiness: All we can expect here is some little Refreshing to keep us from Fainting and Languishing. This World is an *Inn*, too narrow and scanty for to give *Satisfactorie ease and fulness*; this is only to be looked for when we come to our *Fathers house*, where there are many *Mansions*, and all Richly and well Furnished; In his Presence, there is fulness of joy, and at his Right Hand there are Rivers of Pleasures for evermore; Psal. 16. 11.

This *Earthly Canaan* which was here promised to *Jacob*, was a type of Heaven, and given as a Pledge thereof: It is not to be doubted, but that the *Patriarch* had a prospect beyond the Land wherein he was, though it was the pleasantest upon Earth, he had already



already tasted these Delights which *Canaan* upon Earth afforded : and albeit they were good enough of their kind, yet he could not but be sensible, that they were far short of of satisfying the Appetite of the *Soul* : And that therefore there was something to be desired, more then what is to be found even in the best Countrey here. *Jacob* had certainly the best and most *vertuous Education* of any in the World, he was preserved from *Vice* and *Immorality*, which render *Men brutish*, and to enteeble their Minds, that they can Dream of nothing but what savours of the *Flesh*; he was early taught all *Natural Wildom* and *Knowledge*, and Instructed also in things which *Natural light* could not reach to : And therefore he certainly knew, and was persawded that there was something within him besides *Flesh and Bones*; even a *Divine Soul* capable of, and designed for a more noble kind of *Life*, then what Man enjoys at present : Because the Promises made to the *Patriarchs* expressed in *Scripture* are *Temporal*, we must not from thence conclude, that they had no other, *Spiritual & Eternal Blessings* were Vailed under these, and might perhaps also be Promised a part, though they be not particularly mentioned ; No doubt more was Revealed to them then  
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what we have an account of, but what is *written was only necessary to be known to us for the pointing out of the Messiah*. It is very unreasonable to think, that they who were so Dearly Beloved of GOD, Honoured with many Particular Revelations, and whose Wisdom and Vertue was more then Ordinary, I say it is unreasonable to think that they were left ignorant of a *future state*. Such a thought is injurious to the Love of GOD, and also inconsistent with that Character they deserve; as unquestionless they had a Curiosity to know, whither there was *another better life* hereafter. So GOD would not refuse to satisfy the same, it being very Laudable and very Necessary for the directing of their Life and composing their minds in Peace, It is but small Comfort and Satisfaction, the *Patriarchs* can be supposed to have had, in the Promises that were made them; if we take away the Hopes and Expectation of another Life: For the Promises did more concern their Posterity then themselves; And as for the Favours presently conferred, the pleasure thereof could not but be very much marred with the thoughts of their Death. Nay, the more Good they Enjoyed, the more they would be Troubled, when they reflected upon their Mortality; And they

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could not but frequently reflect thereon, seeing every where Instances thereof are to be met with. Death damps a Man's Spirit, and Imbitters his Life; The greater matter of Contentment one hath at present, the greater will be his Dilquiet when he thinks he will die: Unless he believe his death will be followed with a long and better Life. It is the Wretched and Miserable, who desire death, or think upon it without Regrate: Others cannot think upon it without sadness, if they have not the Comfort which ariseth from the Assurance of after Happiness. *O death, saith the Son of Sirach, how bitter is the Remembrance of thee to a Man that liveth at rest in his Possessions, And to the Man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath Prosperity in all things, Yea, unto him that is yet able to receive Meat; Eccles. 41: 1, 2.* If then the Patriarchs had been ignorant of a Future State, and without the Hopes of it, their Life would have been very Miserable; And the Singular Blessings GOD bestowed on them, would have but tended to increase their misery. But that another better State was made known to them, and that they lived in the expectation of it, is plainly intimat to us by St. Paul Heb. 11. 13. &c. where he saith, *these all died in Faith, not having*

ing received the Promises, but having seen them a far off, and were perswaded of them, and Embraced them, and Confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth, for they that say such things, Declare plainly that they seek a Countrey; And truly if they had been mindful of that Countrey from whence they came out, they might have had Opportunity to have returned but now they desire a better Countrey, that is an Heavenly. Therefore GOD is not ashamed to be called their GOD, for He hath prepared for them a City. And a little before he tells us particularlie of Abraham that he looked for a City which hath foundations, whose Maker and Builder is GOD. Which he could not look for in this World, and therefore certainly he expected it in that which is to come.

It we break off the Fetters of Lusts, and Disintangle our selves from Carnal and Worldly interests, and allow our Souls but any measure of Rational Wisdom; As then our Desires would soon take Wing and flee above Sublunarie Enjoyments, so our Minds would be easily inclined to believe another better State to succeed this: For without this Supposition, Man is the strangest and most Puzling Phenomena, the most Unaccountable thing in Nature, a Beeing patcht up of Irregularities & Contradictions: For by



Nature he is capable of Immortality, and yet as to his Duration but an *Ephmera*, of so short a Life, that he bends to die almost as soon as he begins to live; He is capable of the highest Perfection, and fitted for the Noblest Employments, and yet if we do not suppose *another Life*, he hath nothing else to do, except to eat and drink, and serve the mean ends of an *Animal Life*; which the *brute Beasts* attain to with much less toil and trouble. Thus *He* who is the Chiefest of all the Creatures we see, and seems to be design'd *Lord* of them, would be in the worst Condition of any; Because never attaining the End and Perfection his Nature is capable of, neither receiving the Satisfaction of his most Reasonable, which is the most Man-like desires. If there were not an after-State preferable to this, *Man* would not be the Ornament of the *Creation*, but rather its Deformity; And would afford some ground of Impeaching the *Divine Wisdom* and *Goodness*, as if either the Contrivance had been marr'd, or the Design of Creating him cruel, in that he is indued with Capacities never to be Perfected, and with Desires and Appetites which cannot receive Satisfaction. Hence it would follow that GOD is kinder to the Beasts than to Man;  
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And that he is the happiest Man who least useth his Reason and Understanding, that is, that layeth aside that which maketh him Man; and endeavours to be as the Beasts who perish. Then they should be in the worst case, of all others the most Miserable who Love and Fear and Serve GOD most, and are most Careful to Please Him. These and a great many more Absurdities would follow the Negation of a *Future State*, which cannot be admitted, unless we deny a *Providence* altogether, and ascribe all things to *blind Chance*. And indeed the *Immortalitie of our Souls* seems to follow so necessarily from a belief of a *Deitie*, that there have been very few who doubted of that, without calling this in Question too.

But though those things may incline us to the belief of a *Future happy State*, yet they do not certainly assure us thereof; They are great and strong *Presumptions* indeed, but no certain *Demonstrations*: Because it might be alledged that these Absurdities are rather the Consequence of our Ignorance, which cannot understand better, then of that supposed state of Man; And that we cannot conclude any thing to be, because that other-ways we are unable to Salve and Vindicate the Wisdom of GOD: For how do we know

know what is Consistant or Inconsistant with *Infinite Wisdom*? Many things may be agreeable thereto which we cannot find out. The undoubted certainty therefore of an *after happy State*, can only be drawn from the *Gospel of JESUS CHRIST*; He hath brought Life and Immortality to Light, 2 Tim. 1: 10. He hath put this matter clearly out of doubt, so that it needs no longer be Disputed as an uncertain *Probleme*. JESUS CHRIST by his plain Assertions, and express Promises, and his own Resurrection, hath Demonstrate to the World that there is another Life to succeed this: So that nothing but Perverseness and Obstinacy can make Men call it in Question. He that will not be Convinced with this Evidence which the *Gospel* giveth, is proove against all Evidence, and it is impossible to Convince him; *He who will not believe Moses and the Prophets, CHRIST and the Apostles, will not believe though One should rise from the dead.*

And as it is the *Gospel* which doth only ascertain us of a *Future State*, so it is from it only that we may learn any true account of the nature and qualities thereof. This is a thing not so easie to be guessed at as the other. If any should offer to describe the  
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State of a Countrey which they had never seen, neither hath any true *Idea* of, this description would be but bad and far from exactness: Now Heaven doth infinitlie transcend the best state in this World, and is of a quite different nature, so that our conceptions could not reach it, unless it were revealed. The Heathens who had not this true light to direct them, entertained wild and extravagant fancies about the nature of that Life which is to succeed this: But yet they were not so gross and absurd as *Mahomet*, who set aside the light of the *Gospel*, and followed his own dreams, which have suggested an odd kind of *Paradise*, and such *Monstruous Pleasures* there, as can relish with none but beastlie and brutish Persons: for others certainly cannot but despise them, and be so far from counting such enjoyments of happiness, that they will certainly reckon it the greatest misery to be tyed to them eternally. Some of that *False Prophets followers*, are so ashamed of this account he gives of Mens happiness in the other World, that they study to put a fair construction thereupon, by interpreting the same allegorically: But though this should be admitted, it will not excuse; for such Similitudes should have been shunned

ed, which can only serve to beget in Mens minds base and low thoughts of that *Blessed Life*, and which are so far from engaging men to purifie themselves here in order to it; that they rather foster an perswasion, that none are fitted and disposed for it: but impure and unclean persons; seeing it is reprented by the exercise of impuritie and the grossest sensualities. It is true, the *Gospel* makes use of Earthly comparisons, in holding forth the *Joyes and excellency of Heaven*; Because otherwayes it is impossible to convey to our minds any apprehension thereof: for as Children must be taught in Childish terms, so men cannot be instructed in things so sublime, and so far above the reach of their understandings, but by using expresions and Similitudes familiar to them though not so just and adequat in themselves. But though the Scripture when it speaks of Heaven, adapts it self to the weaknels of our apprehensions, yet at the same time it guards sufficiently against all low and sordid thoughts: for both the *Metaphors* used are choise and cleanlie, and the manner of handling them su h, as gives us to Understand, that we are not to take them Literally. The glory of the other Life it set forth by *Crowns*, and *Scepters*, and *Banquet*-

*quietings and Rivers of Pleasures* ; But we are also abundantly cautioned against the expectation of carnal gratifications ; for these cannot be look'd for there , where the state of things makes them no wayes desirable , but altogether unneccessarie ; for then men live not an *Animal Life*, but a life *Sublimely Spiritual*.

All the circumstances and particularities of the *Life to come* are not revealed , neither are we yet capable to know them. At present our faculties are not fitted to discern the pleasures and enjoyments above ; even though they were laid out before us , we could no more take them up then a blind Man colours, or the Infant in the Womb, the Cheerfulness of this lightsome World , or Child the strong contents of riper Age. When *St paul* was caught up into *Paradise* he was so transported besides himself , that he knew not well *whither he was in the body, or out of the body* ; And what he saw and heard there , he tells us is *unspeakable, and not possible to be uttered* ; 2 Cor. 12. 4. Untill the temper and Disposition both of body and mind be changed and Spiritualized , we can neither enjoy that Life above , nor yet fully understand the Pleasures and satisfactions thereof.

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But that all possible Felicity, will both be then bestowed, and there also enjoyed, is not only expressly promised, but this we may very well conclude from what is revealed. For *first*, that State above, hath nothing troublesome or uneasie in it. It is not like this World lyable to rough Weather, severe Storms, or excessive heats, which occasion fainting; nor doth there ever fall out any sad disaster or calamitie to discompoſe the minds of the Inhabitants. There be some Mountains, as *Tenariff*, which surmount the Clouds, and it is said the Air about the top of them is alwayes so calm, that the smallest Sand or Dust will remain unblown away, and in the same manner it was first laid down, which may be no unfitt Emblem of the Tranquillitie of Heaven: It is the Fate only of these *Sub-lunarie Countreys*, to be intested with Fogs and Mists, with Wind and Rain; such is the constitution of this World, that the pleasures here are marr'd and allay'd, by some or other disgustfull inconvenience which always attend them: but the *Heavenly Regions* are ever Clear and Serene, there is a perpetuall Calm there, and a constant Freedom from all sort of Disturbances. They, who are there, saith *St. John*, shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more,

more, neither shall the Sun light on them, nor any heat: For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto Living fountains of Waters, and GOD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there shall be no more death; neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away, Rev. 7. 17. 21. 4.

Secondly not only what Disquiets our present Life, and holds us in continuall Vexation, is for ever thrust out of Heaven: but also the Beautie and Ornaments of this World, are laid aside as Impertections and Unnecessarie things; and what is *infinitlie more glorious*, take places in stead of them. The Sun is the Beautie of this *lower World*, and how disconsolat would our Condition be without the light thereof. But so glorious is the State above, and so excellent, that the Sun it self, and its Light would be but a Blemish there: for St: John tells us, that the Heavenly Jerusalem had no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to shine in it; for the Glory of GOD did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof; and again, there shall be no night there, and they need no candel, neither light of the Sun: for the LORD GOD giveth them light, Rev. 21. 23. and 22. 5. All Kings and  
R 2 Princes,

Princes, Study to have their Courts answerable to their Magnificence and Dignitie; The Palaces of Kings are alwayes Seated in the best part of their Kingdoms, and thither are brought the Chief delights which their Countreys can afford: How Glorious and Magnificent then must Heaven be, which is the Palace of the great King, the Peculiar habitation of GOD himself? it he hath so Beautified this World, and Replenished it with such variety, when it is only the *lower apartment of beasts*; or at the best but a *transient quarter* for Man, What do we think will that be, and how sumptuously Enriched, which he hath design'd to be his own everlasting abode, and the Habitation of those peculiar ones whom he hath set his love upon, and with whom he hath determined to remain for ever? There certainly GOD will display Himself, and His Glory, and will give *Admirable Manifestations* of his Wisdom; Power Goodness, and other Perfections; beyond what *either eye hath seen, or eare heard, or what can enter into the heart of Man.*

*Thirdly,* The excellent company which are in Heaven is no small Addition to the Happiness thereof; They are Persons far from Malice and Envy, from intertaining Suspicions

picious and Animosities, or from being ready to fall out in jars and contests: But as they are Enriched with the best Endowments, so they are Acted with the largest Charity and Good-will; loving each other intirely, and intertaining one another with all the Indearing expressions of Friendship. Of all pleasures, Friendship and the society of Excellent Persons is the greatest; it affects the mind most, and fills the Heart with the greatest Measure of Joy and Gladness: what Delight and Satisfaction then, may be expected in the Society of *Angels* and *Arch-Angels*, *Cherubims* and *Seraphims*, and *the Spirits of just Men made perfect*?

But *fourthly*, in the *other life* we shall find our selves, not only in a far better State as to Externals: but shall also feel great and Glorious Changes in our selves. For *first*, we shall not be tyed to the necessity, of Eating and Drinking and Sleeping, in which mean exercises, the one half of our time is consumed; there we shall not be cloged and fettered to a crazy, infirm, and sickly Body as now, for then this Corruptible shall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal, Immortality. And CHRIST JESUS shall change this vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his Glorious Body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things.

things to himself; 1 Cor. 15. Phil 3. 21. There shall be a vast Change in the Frame and Constitution of our Body: For there shall be given to it, Glory and Power, and Splendor, and some other Subtile and Excellent Qualities, so far above the *common Nature* of Bodies, that the *Apostle* thought fit to term it a *Spiritual Body*. \* Secondly, As such Glorious Changes are to be wrought upon our Bodies, so the like shall be done to our Souls; the Body is thus changed into the better, because the Soul is also made more perfect: these excellent Endowments are bestowed upon the Body, because the Perfection and Dignity to which the Soul is now raised, require that it should be so lodged; For being our inward Faculties are much better then Formerly, the outward Organs and Instruments of Action should be better too. Now our Souls shall not only be delivered from Ignorance and Errour, and all the Disorders which sin hath involv'd them into, but shall also have all their Faculties rectified, and elevat to the outmost height of Perfection, of which Creatures are capable. Truth shall not then be vail'd with Absurdity, nor shall we be oblig'd to seek the Knowledge thereof; by such tedious and uncertain inquiries as now we are  
necessitate



necessitate to: But shall be endowed with all desirable Wisdom; Now sayes the *Apostle*, *We see through a Glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know as also I am known; 1 Cor. 13. 12.* And to make our Souls compleatly perfect, there shall be added unspotted Puritie and Holiness, and a participation of the Divine Nature. Beloved, saith St. *John*, *now are we the Sons of GOD; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, 1 John 3. 2.* The Image of GOD, shall be renewed upon our Souls, and that more clearly and brightly then it was at our first Creation; the Divine Perfections shall be transcribed upon us, and thereby we shall be brought into a near and inconceivable Union with GOD. And now seeing this doth appear, what needs more? Here we may well stay our Thoughts, for indeed there is no climbing higher; GOD is Perfection it self, and the Fountain of all Happiness, he therefore must needs be most Happy, who is like GOD and United to him. It is simply impossible to conceive greater Happiness and Satisfaction, then this Enjoyment of GOD and likeness to him. *David* doubted not of receiving Satisfaction from this, when he said, *As for me I will be-*  
*bold*

*bold thy Face in righteousness , I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness; Psal. 17. 15.*

This is true *Felicity*, and should be aspired after, 'tis a shame for any Man to sit down lower, or to content himself with less Degrees of Happiness, seeing GOD is willing to bestow this upon him. The obtaining *Heaven and Eternal Life* should be our main Project, and the great Design we should be alwayes dryving on, nothing should divert us from this; but all our Endeavours should be to further it on: And our Prayers to GOD should be chiefly, that he would be pleased to *favour this aim of ours, and not suffer us to miscarry.* Some whom Worldly Love and Carnal Affections have seized and enslaved, may with *Reuben and Gad* wish to have *their Tabernacles set up this side Jordan*: And providing they could get their Portion in this Life, would never seek after the *Land of Promise*: But such certainly Act contrary to Reason, and unbecoming the Dignity of their Natures, They must put off the *Man* very much who intend no higher Pleasures then what are Bodily, and arise from the Enjoyment of Earthly things; Which though glutted to the full, can never satisfie the Soul. As all Mens Experience do testifie. *As Noahs Dove found*

*no rest untill she returned to the Ark;* So neither can the Soul of Man have any solide content until it ascend into *the holy hill of GOD;* and rest in the bosom of him from whom it had its being.

And as Man's *true Felicity* lyes not in this, but in the other World, so the chief Satisfaction which we can have at present, flows from the sure and well grounded Hopes of that after Happiness; even as the greatest content of a Merchant while he is Trafficking abroad, is in the Expectation of the Gain he will make when he comes home: And as the chiefest delight of an Heir while he is *Minor*, is in his hopes of succeeding to his Father's Honour and Fortune when he arrives at full Age. Here we are as it were, in the Quality and Condition of *Minors*, and therefore have no Reason to grudge though we be not put actually in the Possession of full Happiness. We may be very well satisfied for the present, that the same is surely reserved to us, and waiting upon us till that we be ripe for it; *Blessed be the GOD and Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, which according to his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not*

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away

*away, reserved in Heaven for us ; 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.*

The Design of this present *Treatise* is to direct to *true Felicity* , which as it is of great Importance to be known ; so we judge we have made some plain Proposals , which may sufficiently instruct those who are desirous to know, if they be also unbyassed. The sum of all this is , that *true Happiness* consists in the Enjoyments of GOD ; for in him only is to be found what may satisfy all our Desires : All the Creatures are but *finite things* , and consequently their use is Limited and Restrained to some few Particulars ; they can neither remedy all evils, nor procure every thing Good and Desirable. The *Sun* gives Light, but doth not nourish ; Meat nourisheth , but doth not Warm ; Cloaths they warm us , but cannot recover our Health ; Physick may do that , but cannot protect us from Dangers ; and therefore we should be little the better, for the Enjoyment of one or a few of these *Temporary Goods* , unless we had all : and even though all were enjoyed , our Souls would crave some Satisfaction beyond what they could afford. The way to be Happy then, is not to seek to amass Wealth and Honour , and the other things of this World : the best and surest way is to seek  
GOD

GOD and make Him our Friend, for in him we shall find whatsoever is necessary, He is *infinite in himself*, and the *exhaustable fountain* of all Good, and there in him what may serve all our necessities, and satisfie our Desires. And as he is our *summum bonum*, our *Chief good*; so he is most readie and willing to Communicate himself to us: If we Labour to Please Him, and to approve our selves to him, he will befriend us as much as is requisite to our *present Condition* here, and hereafter when we are rendred capable thereof, he will Bless us with the full Enjoyment of Himself, whereby we shall be possessed of the most *Perfe& Felicity*.

*Perfe& Felicity* is not to be met with in this World, in vain do men look for it, it is reserved till the *next Life*: All the Happiness which here we can enjoy, consists in the hope of that *perfect Happiness which is to come*; and in having fair Opportunities to secure it, together with the competent supplye of our *present bodily necessities*. He then who would be truly Happy, let him make GOD and Heaven his great aim; for this will certainly lead to that Compleat and unspeakable Felicity of the other World; And in the mean time will procure him



all the Satisfaction desirable in this. If we were so wise as to propose this to our selves, our Life would not be so uneasie and troublesome as ordinarily it is : but we should enjoy a great deal of Tranquillity and Peace. For hereby we should be preserved from *immoderat cares, discontentedness, and impatience*, which so much disturb our Minds, and are the only hinderances of our *present Felicity*. First, he who placeth his Happiness in GOD, and sincerely pursueth *Eternal Life*, needs not vex himself with *cares about the things of this Life* : but may cast all his care upon GOD, who will undoubtedly sustain him; and who hath promised, that if we seek first the Kingdom of GOD, and his righteousness, all these things shall be added unto us. Matth. 6. 33. Secondly, this will bring our Minds to be contented, with Moderat and Competent Supplies, by taking off our thoughts from Wealth and Greatness and Honour, &c. Having food and Raiment, saith the Apostle, let us be therewith content : And good reason, seing it is all that Travellers stand in need of. All that is requisite to one in a Journey, is his *Viaticum*, convenient Dyet, Cloathing, and Lodging, and a safe and Peaceable Passage. Other things would but retard the Journey

ney, and render it less easie and safe..  
*Thirdly*, this would free us from impatience  
the last Enemy of our Peace, and would  
make us bear trouble and Receive Disast-  
ers with a Serene composed Spirit; Consi-  
dering that *our time here is but short*, and  
soon at an end, and that when we come  
Home to our Father's house, we shall have  
all things to our Mind, and shall soon be  
made to forget our Toil and Travel. No  
Wise Man who sets out upon a Journey will  
fret and be dejected because the Weather is  
not alwayes Fair, and the way smooth,  
and that he finds not every where as good  
Accommodation, as at Home. While  
Men are Travellers in torreign Countreys,  
they must resolve upon Hardships and in-  
conveniencies: And we have this great en-  
couragement, to Patience and Cheerfulness  
even in the midst of Troubles, that no  
Trouble or Calamitie can defeat our De-  
signs, if we be but stedfast to them; If we  
keep our Hearts fixt upon GOD, and con-  
stant to the prosecution of Eternal Life, we  
shall certainly arrive there, what ever wea-  
ther it blow, and whatever Opposition we  
meet with. It is impossible for either Men  
or Devils, to separate us from GOD, or to  
keep us out of Heaven, if we continue sincere  
in

in our Love, and Endeavours.

And now that we may draw to a Conclusion, as what hath been said sheweth where our *true Felicity* lyes, So it discovereth the Wretched Folly of the greatest part of Mankind; Who though they all desire Happiness, yet miss it: Because they seek it not where it is, but place the same in some vain empty Enjoyments. It is sad, to behold how Wild and Extravagant Men are in their Aims and Proposals, how hotly they pursue Toyes and Trifles and very means Things? and in the mean time, how careless they are of what they should most mind, *viz. GOD* and their *eternal Interest*. All are sensible that they *cannot live here for ever*; Its evident and visible unto them, that *Nil they, Will they*, they must be gone out of this World: And yet very few, are so wise as to endeavour that it may be well with them, when they remove hence. Their Thoughts for the most part are about the present World, and the things thereof, as if they were never to leave them; Certainly though they could brook them alwayes, they could not intend them more earnestly, or be more busie about them. Some being dazled with the Splendour, and Glistering of Riches, labour for them with  
all

all their Might, others grasp at Power and Command, as if that were some Fine or Happy thing; some study to be accounted wise and Learned, some would raise themselves a Name, And desire to be the talk and Discourse of the World, every one has his Different aim and design which he followeth, *trahit sua quemque voluptas*; And that they may compass these their several Aims, They are still holding themselves and others in continuall Vexation and Trouble, and do fill the World full of Jarres and Conteſts. Now this behaviour of of Men is moſt Unreaſonable and Unaccountable, ſeing our Dayes are ſo few and that we are of ſo ſhort continuance in this World; theſe things might be ſomewhat excuſable if we were to live here for ever; but ſeing that cannot be, ſeing by the *Eternal Decree* of GOD, we are only appointed to Lodge here for a ſhort time, how vain and fooliſh is it to make a great dale adoe about that which is neither neceſſary to our Preſent Peace and Comfort, nor yet to our Future Happineſs; It is juſt as if a Traveler coming to an Inne, where he were to ſtay but for a Night, and finding it but Poor and Mean and ill Accommodat, ſhould preſently ſend for Maſons, Carpenters and Painters,

Painters to repair and beautifie it : Or as one upon his Arrival to any great City, should presently aspire to the highest Dignity and Preferment in it : And raise Stirs and Factions for that end, when he knew assuredly that he must leave it the next day. If by such Impertinencies Men did only disturb their Present Peace and Quiet, the matter were yet the less, though even here their Loss would exceed their Gain, suppose they should obtain their Desire ? But alas the great concerns of another World are often put in hazard thereby ! Their Souls for the most part perish in these Attempts, and by their Eagerness to have those vain and short Enjoyments of this present Life, they often keep themselves from receiving the Satisfactory and *Eternal possessions above*. *O that men were wise, O that they understood this, that they would consider their Latter end* O that they were so Wise, and Happy, as not to enterprize or engage themselves into any Pursute : untill they first Weighed and Examined the importance thereof, whither the Fruit and Event would recompense the Pains and Labour ! O that they would but put that Question often home to themselves, *What is a man profited if he should gain*



be whole World, and loss his own Soul? And what will a man give in exchange for his Soul? *Matth. 16. 26.* What a Madness and Unexcuseable Folly is it to be much concerned for a *Transitory Life*, and little for *Eternity*? To take much thought for things which perish, and which we must shortly leave, and to mind little or to seek with indifference that which *endureth for ever*? Here saith the *Apostle*, we have no continuing City, but we seek one to come; *Heb. 13. 14.* Our Heads and our Hearts, should be still towards *Heaven*, the recovery of that Countrey above, for which we were first designed, and to which we Naturally belong; this I say, should be our chief Aim and main Project; All other things in comparison to this are but idle Fancies, and building Castles in the Air; He that doth not so live as that he may be received into Glory when he dies, he hath lived to very little purpose; He deserves the Tomb and Epitaph of that Luxurious and Useless Emperour *Sardanapalus*, in which there was drawn two Fingers, and sounding one upon another with these words, *NON TANTI EST*, that is, *all is not worth the while*. Men are seldom wise till it be out of time, but sure if they did but consult their own Experience, they should be more sensible

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sible of the Folly of many of their Designs and Enterprises; And if we did ask the greatest Warriour and Conquerour in the World, he that had been the most Successful in his Aims to be Rich, and Great, and Honourable, when he were departing hence, what pleasure or profit he received thereby: He would no doubt give us *Solomon's* Verdict. *All is vanity and vexation of Spirit*, the Prosecution of them produceth Vexation, the Enjoyment proveth Vanity, and the Reflection makes them *tristes ineptiæ*, soure and sad trifles, and they carry little away with them, besides the Memory of being so ill employed.

*What hast thou by thy happiest project gain'd,  
But thou repent'st thy pains, and wish obtain'd.*

This *Saladine* that great *Sultan of Egypt*, loudly proclaimed to the World, when he discharged all *Funerall Solemnities*, and ordered only a *Black shirt*, in which when dead he was to be wrapt, to be carried through the Camp on a Lance, and one to cry before it, *This is all which Saladine the Emperour receives of his great Wealth, and vast Empire.* Which *Bocarius* hath put into this distich;

*Vixi Divitijs regno tumidusque trophæis,  
Sed pannum heu nigrum nil nisi morte tuli.*

*With Riches, Power, and Trophæes I did swell,  
Now a Black Skirt doth only with me dwell.*

Death is a convincing proof of the Vanitie of all Worldly things, it shews to how little purpose it is to Labour and contend so earnestly for them; for when that hour comes, they must be all thrown away, the use of them ceaseth. *When a man dieth, saith the Psalmist, he shall carry nothing away, his Glory shall not descend after him; Psal: 49: 17:* And though it should, yet in the other World Men do not take place as in this, according to their Birth, Wealth and Grandeur, 'tis Vertue only and True Holiness, which makes a Man's way there. *In the morning when they awake, it is the Upright only which shall have dominion;* And therefore let Men reckon when they will, he is the most Happy who hath enjoyed the greatest Quietness and Peace, tho it should not be much attended with outward Pomp and Grandeur; And who when he is to leave this World, hath some good and well grounded Hopes of being admitted into that

bleſſed State, where he ſhall enjoy GOD, and the Society of *Angels*, and *Immortal Felicities*.

Now that we may be all thus Happy, let us henceforth take off our Eyes from viewing the Vanities of this World; let us beware of being deceived with its *gaudy allurements*: But let us ſeek and endeavour ſeriouſly, to *lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godlineſs and Honesty*. Let us as much as in us lyes, *follow Peace with all Men*, and prevent unneceſſary and impertinent Strifes and Debates; That enjoying an outward Peace with others, we may be the more capable to maintain the inward Peace of our own Conſciences, and a true Peace with our GOD: That when *he hath ſerved himſelf of us in this World*, he may thereafter receive us, to the enjoyment of himſelf, and of his endleſs Glory.

Seneca Thyeſt *Act. 2.*

*Stet quicunque volet potens*

*Aulæ culmine lubrico :*

*Me dulcis ſaturet quies ;*

*Obscuro poſitus loco,*

*Leni perfruar otio ;*

*Nullis nota Quiritibus*

*Ætas per tacitum ſuat.*

*Sic cum transferint mei*

*Nulla*

*Nullo cum strepitu dies,  
Plebeius moriar senex,  
Illi mors gravis incubat,  
Qui notus nimis omnibus,  
Ignotus moritur sibi.*

Let him that will ascend the tottering Seat  
Of Courtly Grandeur, and become as great  
As are his mounting wishes ; as for me,  
Let sweet repose, and rest my portion be.  
Give me some mean obscure recess ; a Sphere  
Out of the road of business, or the fear  
Of falling lower, where I sweetly may  
My self, and dear Retirement still enjoy:  
Let not my life, or name, be known unto  
The Grandees of the times, tost to and fro  
By censures, or applause ; but let my age  
Slide gently by, not overthrow the stage  
Of publick action ; unheard, unseen  
And unconcern'd, as if I ne're had been,  
And thus while I shall pass my silent dayes  
In shady privacy, free from the noise  
And busles of the World, then shall I  
A good old innocent Plebeian dye.  
Death is a meer surprise, a very snare,  
To him that makes it his lifes greatest care  
To be a publick Pageant, known to all,  
But unacquainted with himself, doth fall.

HALES.

The



## The Character of a Happy Life.

*How happy is he born and taught,  
That serveth not anothers will ?  
Whose Armour is his honest thought :  
And simple truth his outmost skill ?*

*Whose passions not his masters are,  
Whose Soul is still prepar'd for death ;  
Unty'd unto the World, by care  
Of publick Fame, or privat Breath.*

*Who envies none that Chance doth raise,  
Nor Vice hath ever understood ;  
How deepest wounds are giv'n by praise,  
Nor rules of State, but rules of Good.*

*Who hath his life from rumours freed.  
Whose conscience is his strong retreat,  
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,  
Nor ruine make oppressours great.*

*Who GOD doth late and early pray,  
More of his grace, then gifts to lend:  
And entertains the harmless day  
With a religious book, or friend.*

*This man is freed from servile bands  
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall:  
LORD of himself, though not of lands,  
And having nothing; yet hath all.*

The end of the first Part.

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# JACOB'S VOW

OR

## MAN'S FELICITY, and DUTY.

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Part Second.

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### *Chapter First.*

*A short Review of the First Part. The Case proposed, how far it is Lawful to eye the Reward in our Resolutions of Obedience. The Resolution given in five Particulars, with an Application of all to Jacob here.*

**T**Here are two things to be considered in every Vow, viz. *What is Promised*, and *what is desired*, this last we have handled already, as to this *Particular Vow of Jacob's* here ; we have in the former Discourse opened up the Nature of his Requests and shewed what he sought of GOD, and made it appear, that as he was Humble and Modest herein, in respect of  
GOD

GOD, so very Wise for himself things craved comprehending all that is Necessary and Requisite to compleat ones Happiness in this present World, he who is accompanied with the Favourable Presence of GOD, who is kept and protected by the Power of the *Almighty*, and who hath Food and Raiment, that is, what is Competent and Sufficient for the serving his Necessities, and the Maintenance of the Present State, he hath all that is desirable in this World; And therefore *Jacob* is a fit *Patern* to direct us how we should steer our course, and what we should Aim at, while in this World, and wherein the Happiness of this *Present Life* doth consist.

Having thus cleared and treated of the *Conditional part* of this Vow; It followes next that we consider and speak to the *Promissory part* thereof, that we may see what the *Patriarch* binds and obliges himself to do to GOD, if so be he bestowed and granted these things to him.

But first, We will Answer and Resolve a *Question* which any may readily start here, and it is this, *whither it be lawfull to take in conditionall Clauses in our Resolutions to serve GOD, or how far we may have a respect to our benefit in our Purposes of Obedience*, for it would seem

seem that *Jacob's* service here was a little *Mercenary*, that he made a formal Bargain with *God*, and that he resolved only to serve him upon condition he did such and such things to him, for he *first* asks, and *then* he promises. For answer to this, we shall first consider the Case in general, and then speak to what *Jacob* did here in particular.

And *first*, you must know that we owe to *GOD* all possible Service and Obedience, even abstracting from these *External Rewards* which he hath to bestow, and which we have good ground to expect from him. Indeed no Man doth or shall serve *GOD* for nought, they be-lye *GOD*, and speak falsely, who say, *It is in vain to serve Him, and what profit is there in keeping his Ordinances*; for he plentifully rewardeth such as seek him in *sincerity* and *truth*, and is most Liberal to all those who come unto him: but however there are other *prior Obligations* and strong *tyes* upon us to Obey and Please Him, so that although we had no Advantage by serving the *LORD*, yet we could neither Reasonably complain of, nor decline His Service, for he is the *Author of our Life and Being*, we are his *Creatures and the work of his hands*; And therefore he hath just Right and Power to command us, and all the Service we are able to

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do, is small enough requital for what he hath already done to us; And he may justly call for it, though he should add no farther Favours. It is his *own Bounty and Goodness* which makes him load us with his Benefits, there is no Obligation upon Him therefore, our Services do not, nor can they Merit any thing at GOD'S Hand, & though we should suppose them never so acceptable or Worthy, yet GOD is alwayes aforehand with us, and we can never draw him in Arrears to us, for our very Life and Being is more then sufficient payment for all that we are able to do.

*Secondly*, the chief Motive to the Service of GOD and the great Principal by which we should be acted in our Obedience, is *that of love*. God himself, and his glory, should be the *chief end*, which we propose to our selves, otherwise our Service is neither Reasonable nor Acceptable. GOD is not like man, that he may be profited by us, *our goodness*, as the *Psalmist* sayeth, *extendeth not to thee; Psal. 16. 2.* And how little will he value what is not done to him, but to another? Now though we be never so much taken up in the Acts of Religion and Vertue, yet that cannot be counted Homage and Worship payed unto GOD, unless we make him



him our *last end*; But it is service only pay-  
ed to that which we chiefly aim at, be it our  
selves and Riches, or Honour, or Pleasure,  
or whatever else we have the greatest re-  
gard to. That for which any thing is be-  
loved, is of it self more beloved, when  
*David* dealt kindly and lovingly with *Me-  
phibosheth* for *Jonathan* his Fathers sake, it is  
a certain Argument that he loved *Jonathan*  
more then *Mephibosheth*. He that loves a  
Man for Money, and for Meat, loves Mo-  
ney and Meat more then the Man, for these  
are the Causes and Ends wherefore he loves  
the Man; so he that serves GOD for any  
other End then GOD, he certainly loves  
that more then GOD. Now if we prefer  
any thing to GOD, we do not love him  
truly, nor will he regard us as upright be-  
fore him. He, saith our Saviour, *who loveth  
Father or Mother, Son or Daughter, or his own  
life more then Me, is not worthy of Me; Matth.  
10. 37. Luke 14. 26.* CHRIST upbraided  
the Men of *Capernaum* for following him,  
because it *was for the loaves*. We do not  
reckon them our Friends, nor do we think  
our selves obliged unto them who wait up-  
on us and do us service, because they bring  
Gain and Advantage to themselves thereby;  
these are *Mercenary Persons*, but he is our  
U 2 Friend

Friend, who abstracting from his own Interest, or from any Advantage which we might procure him, doth freely and heartily set himself to please us, or to assist us in our Affairs. *If a Man visits a sick Friend, and watches at his pillow for Charities sake, and because of his old Affection, we approve it, but if he does it in hope of a Legacy, he is a Vulture, saith Seneca, and only watcheth for the Carcass; So he is a Mercenary and sordid person who respecteth more the Benefits which fall from GOD, then GOD himself, and GOD will not much regard this Man's service; but he indeed shall please him, who being acted not so much out of Self-interest, as out of a pure regard to GOD, doth Serve and Obey him, who makes the Glory of GOD his chief end; and who aims at nothing more then to please him, and who is more glad of the Occasion thereof, then of any external Advantage which redound by it.* “*Non sine premio diligitur Deus, saith holy Bernard, etsi*”  
 “*absque præmii intuitu diligendus sit; that is,*”  
 “*GOD is never loved without a* Bernard.  
 “*reward, albeit he is not to be* Tract. de  
 “*loved chiefly for the Reward;* dilig. DEO.  
 “*our Love to Him can never be un-*”  
 “*profitable, but yet it should not be*”  
 “*Mercenary, for it should not seek its own things.*”  
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*The Soul that loveth GOD should not require a greater Reward of its Love, then GOD himself, or if it require any other thing, it doth not love GOD, but that other thing.*

But *Thirdly*, though we must chiefly serve GOD for himself, and what we do to him and for him must in the first place be out of pure love to him, yet we may have also a respect to our selves, and to our own proper good, this doth not hinder the other; these two are not inconsistent together to love our selves, and to desire our own Happiness needs not imped, but should rather further our Loving GOD above all things. The best way of loving our selves is to endeavour the enjoyment of GOD, *ille satis se diligit qui sedulo agit ut summo fruatur bono.* There are implanted in our very Nature great desires of Happiness, and it is impossible to root them out; we shall as soon cease to be, as cease to have Desires for our Preservation and well being, or not to intend this in all we do, and therefore it is certainly Lawfull to have an eye to our own Good and Felicity, providing that we subject this to the Glory of GOD, and make it subordinate to the Desires of pleasing him. It doth not Spoil or cast a Blot upon a Son's respect and love to his Father, that he minds and seeks his

own interest, & doth expect a share in his Father's Inheritance; if so be he do it not to the greif and displeasure of his Father; neither doth it shew that we want True Love to God, that we seek and aim at our own Happiness, if so be we do not prefer our selves to GOD, nor yet take Courses to obtain our Happiness contrary to the Will and Commands of GOD. In the LORD'S Prayer, which is both a Patern of our Prayers, and the rule of our Desires, we are taught as in the first place to intend the *Glory of GOD, the hallowing of his Name, the Advancement of his Kingdom, and the fulfilling of his Will*; So thereafter to desire our own Good in the necessary Sustenance of our Soul and Bodies, and in our Deliverance from Sin and Danger. "The Gospel doth not (saith one) " Plainly prohibit us the Love of our selves, " but teacheth only to Moderate it rightly, " to Subject it to GOD, and to referr it to " Him, we must not Love GOD for our " selves, so as that we our selves are to be " considered as the Last end, and GOD " only to be placed in the Order of Means, " by the fruition of whom we may be rendered Happy, but becaule we pertain to " GOD whom we ought to Love above all " things, therefore also we ought to Love  
our



our selves with a reference to GOD : our Good is therefore to be sought , that in it we may taste the Goodness and Sweetness of God , and that Gods peculiar measure, (so to speake) may be so much the more enlarged; thus our own proper love should be swallowed up in that Ocean of the *Divine Love*.

*Fourthly* , It is not only Allowable , but is Necessary and Commanded, that we propose to our selves and have still before our eyes the Eternal Rewards of the other World , and We can never intend these enough. They do not understand things well , who study to take Peoples thoughts off these, and who go about to persuade Men, that that Obedience is not Perfect, which is done for Heaven; these are wild and *Extravagant Principles* , and it is sometimes advanced and set forth by a *Romantik a fable*, of a Womans going with a Torch in the one hand, and a Bucket of Water in the other , the one to burn up Heaven, the other to drown out the fire of Hell ; That Men might serve GOD neither for the Hopes of the One , neither out of Fear of the other. It is a peece of Arrogancy to model Mens Obedience otherwise then GOD hath done , and to offer



offer to take away these things which GOD hath Ordained, and which he hath proposed to Men to push them on the more forwardly in all manner of well-doing. And as one saith, *if the Dowry which GOD hath given to Vertue, and Religion, were taken away, they would perhaps have but few Platonick Lovers.*

----- *Quis enim virtutem amplectitur ipsam,  
Præmia si tollas ?*

However all the Saints and Servants of GOD mentioned in *Scripture*, are said to have had the *Promises of GOD for the future Life* before them. We are told of Moses, *that he had a respect unto the recompence of the Reward*; Heb. 11. 26. And Saint Paul proposed to himself the *Crown of Righteousness*; 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. Yea it is said of our Saviour himself, *that he had an eye to the Joy which was set before him*; Heb 12. 2. And St. Peter tells us the end wherefore there are given unto us, *such exceeding Great and Precious Promises, is that thereby we might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the Corruption that is in the world through lust*; 2 Pet. 1. 4. Thus it is not only Lawfull and Necessary for us to look often to that which GOD himself hath proposed to us; that we may be the more Power-

Powerfully Excited and Encouraged to run the Wayes of GOD, and to keep his Commandements: Nay the Glory and Felicity of the other World is a thing which GOD hath chiefly before him, and therefore we should have it also. Obedience to the Laws of GOD is the Means only to carry it on, and so the end why we should do this, is to obtain that, and by intending that we truly Glorifie GOD, and do shew that we prefer him before all things. For the Main and great Happiness of Heaven it self consists in the clear Knowledge and full Enjoyment of GOD; and therefore, as one saith, *it is too great nicety to distinguish between GOD and Heaven, his Glory and our Salvation, for they are not really things distinct; We cannot in a true Sense seek the Salvation of our Souls more then the Glory of God, for the one is the Advancement of the other. Heaven is not a thing without us, nor is happiness distinct from a Conjunction with God, to love God above our selves, is not indeed so properly to love him above the Salvation of our Souls, as if they were distinct things, but it is to love Him above all our Sinful Affections and particular Beeings, and to conform ourselves to him.*

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Smith

Sel: Dis:

pag. 399

Fifthly and Lastly, the proposing to our  
X
selves

selves the *temporal enjoyments* of this World, as a *Principal end*, the making Wealth, Honor and Riches a main Motive why we serve GOD, and Obey him, is altogether Unlawfull. It is a peece of the grossest Hypocrisie, and Men do thereby dishonour GOD and Religion, in making them stoup for to Serve their *base Carnal designs*; they who are guilty of this, cannot be said so much to exercise Religion and Vertue, as to abuse them, and in steed of Honouring GOD they do but put a Mock upon him, like that Gentleman in *Eliau*, who coming into the presence of the *Persian King*, at his entry into the Presence Chamber he stouped to take up his Ring, which he purposely let fall, that thereby he might be thought to pay that adoration to that Monarch which the Laws obliged him to. Satan laid this to *Job's* charge, and would have made it believed, that it was only GOD'S Blessing him with Outward Prosperity which tied him so much to the Service of GOD. doth *Job*, saith he, *Fear GOD for nought? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about all his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath*

and

and he will curse thee to thy face ; Job I. verse  
o, 11. The Devil thought *Job* was of  
he humor of some who keep close by a  
Man, whilst any thing is to be expected  
from him, and that he is in a capacity of  
doing them good, but so soon as Fortune  
frowns, and his Condition alters they turn  
their backs and run away: To take off which  
ash from *Job*, and to convince the World  
of the falshood of this Acculation, it was that  
GOD gave Satan power over all that which  
he possessed. And indeed though the ser-  
ving of GOD be the most Natural,  
Reasonable and Proper Way, for  
securing to our selves the good things  
of this Life, yet he suffers his  
Faithful Servants sometimes to fare worst,  
that their Sincerity may be tryed and mani-  
fested, and that Men may learn thereby to  
seek and serve him for higher and more  
noble ends. GOD requires us to *mortifie all  
immoderate desires for the things of this Life*, to  
be so far denyed to all *sublunary enjoyments*, as  
neither to care much, whither we have  
them or want them, not to be overjoyed  
and lifted up when they come unto us ; nor  
yet dejected and cast down when they re-  
move from us ; and therefore it is not law-  
ful for us to have our Hearts set upon that



which GOD teacheth us to despise, and besides that can be no true and proper Motive to *Religion*, and the *Service of GOD* which sometimes cannot be obtained, otherwise then by swerving from them; ye cannot serve GOD and Mammon, saith CHRIST, and the Reason is clear, because their Commands often interfere and come in Competition together. We cannot sometimes secure our Life or Fortune, our Honour or Means but by renouncing GOD, and Obedience to his Laws, wherefore our Saviour tells us plainly, *if any Man come to Me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be My Disciple; Luke 14. 26.* That is, if a Man cannot find in his Heart to part with these freely, he needs not offer to follow Him, for he will sometimes be necessitat to leave him. If to have the World be the *chief motive* why one comes to GOD, for the same Reason, he will sometimes forefak him, and GOD will have no Regard to that Man, who minds not to be constant, but who serveth only for a time. Wherefore I wish that Wealth, Honour and other *Temporal things*, were less insisted on as Motives to *Christian duties*, though I deny t, but that it may be proper enough some



Sometime, or occasionally to shew that Religion conduceth to our present happiness; as the Poet saith,

-----*Semita certe*

*Tranquilla per virtutem patet unica vita.*

But who come to CHRIST meerly for these Worldly Respects, cannot be accounted Converts: and as he upbraided the Men of Capernaum, so it may be said to them; *Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the Loaves, and were filled; John 6: 26.*

But here it will be objected and said, by some, doth not GOD in the Scripture give us many Temporal Promises? Doth he not frequently propose to us Wealth, and Honour, and the other good things of this Life, as the Reward of our Obedience; and is it Unlawfull to have an eye to GODS own Promise, and to Desire that Reward which he hath proposed? For Answer hereto, we are to consider that GOD makes these Promises, not to draw our Hearts after the World, or to make us think that our Happiness lies in the enjoyment thereof; but only to free us from Immoderate Cares, and to engage us to serve Him without Anxiety and Solitude for these Temporall things we stand in need of while we are here:

That

That we may not be diverted from the Service of GOD, nor interrupted in our pursuit of these Eternal Felicities in the other World, by a too great thoughtfulness for the Relief of our Necessities in this; therefore it is that GOD hath made us the Promise not only of what is simply Necessary, but even also of Plenty and Abundance, and the only use we are to make of these Promises, is to encourage our selves with the Expectation of what is Good,

*Temporalia hæc me,  
O Domine, juvent  
utentem, non corrumpant  
mentem & amorem  
meum retorqueant  
in te Artificem  
eorum, ne in his quæ  
placent mihi, ego displiceam  
tibi. Amen hæc,  
sed plus te amem,  
& hæc propter te  
amen; Et si ista*

*diligam, ut subiecta diligam, ut famulantia diligam,  
diligam ut arrham sponsi, ut munera amici, ut beneficia  
Domini, sic tamen ut meminerim semper, quæ tibi  
debeam, ista propter te, & per ista, & super ista  
te diligam. Illis adhæream dilectione transitoria, tibi  
inhæream dilectione mansoria.*

Usefull and Convenient for us, and all the Reason why we should desire these things here below is, that we may be rendred thereby more serviceable to GOD, and more Profitable unto others, that the good things of this World may become to us Pledges of these better things above.

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The sum of what we have said in Answer to the Question proposed is this, That there is an Indispensible Obligation upon us to serve GOD, abstracting from any Consideration of the Benefit to be had thereby, and that our Services are then best and most Acceptable, when they are performed in Regard of GOD himself, and out of *Pure love* to him: but that however we may Respect our own Good, and Seek our own Happiness, and pursue for *Heaven and Eternal Life*; for this is not inconsistent with the *Purest love* of GOD, but only *Subordinate* thereunto. But as for the *Temporal things* of this World, it is Unlawful to make them our *Chief* and *Ultimat End*, or to propose them to our selves as any main *Motive* & inducement to the Observance of GOD, or his Laws, for we should resolve to cleave to GOD, whither he gives us these things or no; Nay though he should leave us altogether Destitute of all Worldly Help and Comfort, yet it should be our Resolution never to forsake him, saying with holy *Job*, *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*; *Job* 13. 15.

Now as to *Jacob's* case in Particular, it doth not appear that he swerved from these *General positions*, which we have laid down,  
yea

yea it seems evident, that he kept close to them. He makes, 'tis true, his Requests for himself first, but his Serving and Honouring of GOD might be the chief thing he had before him: If he had Aimed more at his own *Private Interest*, than at the *Glory* of GOD, he would not have been so Modest in his Desires, nor yet contented himself with so small a Portion as Food and Raiment, he would certainly have sought more; but that he did not seek more, makes it clear, that he gave himself freely to GOD without Respect to his Benefits. GOD had been promising him the whole land of Canaan for a possession to him and his Posterity, and he to let see that it was not upon that Account he tied himself to GOD, and Resolved to become his Servant, he asked no more but Food and Raiment. As if he had said, "though thou do not so great things, if thou grant but Food and Raiment. If thou wilt but bring me back to my Fathers house in peace, though I should never brook this Land as my Property and Possession, yet thou shalt be my God". Thus Jacob loved GOD for himself, like a Friend and not for his Benefits, like a Merchant. Could Jacob have passed by Food and Raiment as well as he did all other good Benefits of



of GOD , he would not have given him-  
 self thus unto GOD upon Com-  
 position , but absolutely and *Hales*  
 without Condition. Now he *Rem: pa:*  
 is constrained to fall upon the 223.

*Condition of Food and Raiment* ,  
 or without this he could not love his  
 GOD , because without this he could not  
 subsist , nor have his Being, by which he  
 evidently witnesses , that he therefore and  
 for no neither End desired to be , but only  
 to Love and Serve his GOD. It was an ex-  
 cellent speech of *Crispus Passienus* , a witty  
 Gentleman of Rome, *quorundam se judicium*  
*nalle quam Beneficium* , *quorundam Beneficium*  
*nalle quam judicium* , that is Some Mans Res-  
 pe& and good Opinion is more to be esteemed then  
 another Man's Benefit ; and one saith, that *Ja-*  
*ob* here doth express the same Conceit:  
 for when he came to compound with *Laban*  
 he made his Bargain in another manner ,  
 he would not serve him for Bread and Rai-  
 ment only , but fourteen years for his Daughters,  
 and sex years for his Flock, by which Means  
 he became Rich , and Wealthy , and the  
 Reason why he Covenanted thus differently  
 with GOD , and with *Laban* was , because  
 with *Laban* he sought his own commodity,  
 but with GOD only his Acceptance and  
 Favour.

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From this Example of *Jacob's* we should all of us learn this Lesson to aim at the Glory of GOD in all our Desires, when we make any Requests for any *Particular Favours*, the chief thing which should Prompt us thereto should be that we may have the *occasion of serving GOD*, some way or other more eminently. Thus *Hannah* when she Prayed for a Son, she at the same time *vowed to devote him to GOD*. And *David* besought the LORD earnestly, *to have mercy upon him, and to consider the trouble which he suffered of them which hate him*; and the end why he desired this was, *that I may, saith he, shew forth all thy Praise in the gates of the Daughter of Zion*; *Psal. 9. 13, 14*. Whither we call for *Spiritual or Temporal Blessings*, we should seek them not for themselves, or to rest in the meer enjoyment of them, but to reflect Honour on GOD, that we having such things may be capacitated and enabled to do him greater Service, we must not let the Reins loose to our Desires, and be over anxious for the enlargement of our State; for oftentimes there is as much of Vanity, and seeking our own Praise in this, as any other thing. Whither we have little or much, what ever our Condition be, be it great or small, we may yet have opportunities enough of Glo-  
rifying

rifying GOD; *Jacob* sought here but *Food and Raiment*, and supposing he should get no more, yet he *devoted* himself to GOD, and resolved to own and acknowledge Him.

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## CHAP. II.

*Shewing the Importance of the Words, The LORD shall be my GOD.*

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### SECTION I.

*The True Sense of the Words is given, and a Proposal of the Particulars to be Treated on under this head.*

**W**E come now to the particular Consideration of what the *Patriarch* vowed and *promised* here. He puts up three Requests unto GOD, and here also he makes three express and *particular Promises*: the first of which is, *that the LORD shall be his GOD*. Some render these words otherwise then we

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have

have them in our Translation, and put another sense upon them; they have it *cumque fuerit Dominus mihi Deus*, making it a fourth Petition, importing as much as if he had said, *if the LORD indeed will be to me a GOD*, which is indeed a very great and comprehensive Request, and doth include all desirable Happiness, for what can One ask more then that GOD should manifest his Wisdom, his Power, his Goodness, and all his other Glorious Perfections for his particular behoof and benefit. Wherefore the *Psalmist* having prayed for the flourishing of their State, *That their Sons may be as Plants grown up in their Youth, and their Daughters as Corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a Palace, that their Garners may be full, affording all manner of Store, that their Sheep might bring forth thousands and ten thousands in their streets, their Oxen strong to labour, that there be no breaking in or going out, nor any complaining in the Streets;* Having, I say, prayed for this, and being much taken with the Consideration of that Happiness, he cries out, *Happy is that People that is in such a case:* but presently he checks himself, and upon second thoughts cries, *Yea, happy is that People whose GOD is the LORD;* *Psal. 144. 15.* intimating thereby to us, that the LORDS interressing himself in

any People, and becoming their GOD, was a greater Happiness, then all that which he had formerly spoken of, did amount to.

But how great and Desireable soever this be in it self, yet we see no Reason why we should interpret the words in this sense, especially seeing they should by this means coincide with the *first petition*; for *the LORD to be with One, and to be Ones GOD*, is one and the same thing; and it is not likely that *Jacob* would have come over twice with one thing in so short a Prayer. However our Translation in this agrees with the *Hebrew*, *Septuagint*, and the *Vulgar Latine*, and we judge it best and more Reasonable to take the words this way.

Here then when *Jacob* promises, that *the LORD shall be his GOD*, it implies two things, First, that he would not serve the Gods of the Nations, whither on this or the other side *Jordan*, that he should take care not to be corrupted with the *Idolatry of the rest of the World*. Secondly, that he should Faithfully serve the GOD of his Fathers, *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, who had here honoured him with a signal manifestation of his Presence, and that to him, and to him only, he should pay all the Homage, Deference, Worship, and Service which is due from Reasonable  
Creatures

*Creatures* to the true GOD. For to take One to be our GOD, is to carry towards him, as to such a *Supreme* and *Infinite* Being, and to yield him what is proper from us who are so far below the *Deity*, and who depend upon it for Life, Breath, and all things.

Thus you see what the *Patriarch* here engaged himself to: And it doth first appear, that it was not an *Arbitrary Free-will-offering* which he here Pitched upon; it was not a thing which he could have passed over, and been Blameless; It is a *Natural or moral duty*, which he and all Men as Men, that is, as *Rational Creatures* are strictly obliged unto, This is *the first and great Commandment*, all other are but parts and branches of this: Wherefore it is that we find this set first in that sum and Abridgement of the *Moral law*, which *Moses* had from GOD, and delivered to the People of *Israel*: *Thou shalt have no other GODS before me*, Requires the same, and neither less nor more then that which *Jacob* here *Vowes* and *Resolves* on, *Viz.* that there shall be no declining and falling off, to the Worship of false GODS, and that the true GOD shall have all the Worship and Service which properly belongs to him.

Wherefore that we may be stirred up to  
imitate



imitate *Jacob's Practice*, and to conform to his Resolutions as well as his Desires: we shall GOD willing clear and make out these following Particulars, *First*, that all Men ought to Worship GOD. *Secondly*, that they ought to be very wary in the Object of their *Worship*, that it be the *true* GOD and none else whom they adore. *Thirdly*, we shall shew what *Worship* and *Service* is requisite to be payed to the *true* GOD.

## SECTION II.

*Of the Reasonableness and Necessity of Worshipping GOD.*

**A**S to the *first*, that all Men ought to Worship GOD, we shall not need to insist much thereon, it being a confessed Principle, and the very dictat of *Natural Conscience*: So that not only those to whom the Word of GOD hath come, but even such also as never had any *Particular Revelation*, have yet looked upon themselves as obliged to the *Worship* of a diety. All the World have  
consented

consented in this, for though there be some *Nations* without Learning, Coin, Cloathes, and the like instances of Politnes and Civility; yet none are so Barbarous as to be without the Acknowledgement of a GOD. Some considering the *Natural proneness* of Men to the Worship of a GOD, have defined Man to be *Animal Religiosum*, and have made *Religion* and not Reason the difference betwixt him and other Creatures: And indeed we never shew so much Reason, or Act so much above the *Inferiour Creatures*, as when we are taken up in the Exercise of Vertue and Religion; all other Actings are but Sense, and *Animal motions*, in which there be many Brutes who do often outdoe us. But when our Reason doth exerce it self in Religion, it is so far above their reach that they cannot offer at an imitation.

Religion and the Worship of GOD, doth indeed suppose that there is One, which we may very well suppose, it being a Truth so evident and demonstrable. Every thing in Nature doth so clearly prove the *existence of a Deity*, that we can never sufficiently admire the Blindness and Stupidity of those who call it in Question: And indeed because it Argues such Stupidity, some have doubted

doubted whither there be, or can be, any real *speculative Atheists*, and do imagine that such as have pretended *Atheism*, have done it only out of an *ostentation of Wit*, and for to shew their Smartness, in being able to Oppose and Dispute the plainest and most received *Opinions*. But whither there be any *Atheists* or not, the *Being of a Deity* may be easily made appear to any whose eyes are but open to see it: His very *Nature* carries a Demonstration in it, and all things else do prove his *Existence*, *Præsentemque refert quælibet herba Deum*. If we look *within* our own selves, there seems to be such an *Impression of a GOD* stamped upon our Minds, as is not easily defaced and blotted out; And how we could have this, without a GOD, is very hard if not impossible to Resolve. And if we take a view of the World without, either of the Parts singly by themselves, or in their *Conjunction* together, we shall discern such admirable *Wisdom* in their *Contrivance*, as might be sufficient to draw the most *Incredulous* to an *Acknowledgement*: for these things are either the *effects of Chance*, or they are the *Works of a Wise Agent*; If the last be said, a *Deity* is granted, and it will be very strange if any have the *Impudence* to assert the *first*. He may

believe anything in the World, though never so Monstrous, who can imagine *blind Chance* could have hit so well, or that things of themselves could have jumped so luckily together, as that the greatest or even *infinite wisdom* cannot be supposed to Rectifie, or to have contrived otherwise. And therefore it was well said by the *Lord Verulam*, "*I had Essay 16. rather beleive all the fables in the Legend, & the Talmud, & the Alcoran, then that this Universal Frame is without a Mind*". The *Atheists* ordinarily object, against such as believe a *GOD*, as if they were too Credulous and of an easie belief; But there is more Reason to retort this upon themselves, for they are the most Credulous who believe the most unlikely things, or what hath the least appearance of Truth: Now what can be more improbable, nay impossible then that Things should be produced without any Cause, or that there should be no Wisdom or Understanding, where the greatest Effects and Instances thereof are to be seen. Though one did take *Gargantua* or *Don Quixot* for true History, or did believe the Wildest and most Unlikely Forgeries of the *old Extravagant Romances*; I could not yet think him so absurd, or judge him to have so large a swallow, as the *Atheist*, who denies a *GOD*,  
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when there are so many and so great evidences and Demonstrations thereof.

Now if there be a GOD, as certainly there is One, there is nothing more clear then that He should be Worshipped. The very *Atheists* will grant this, even those who as yet *deny a God*, will acknowledge the necessity of Worshipping One if he be found; And in Truth it is hard to tell which of the two are most unreasonable, *he who denies there is a GOD*, or *he who refuses to worship the GOD whom he believes*. If Prudence and Interest, do oblige Men to Honour and Obey Kings and Monarchs, that under their Favour they may enjoy Safety and Peace; should not every one for that same very Reason, adore and do homage to the *great King*, to whom all the Princes and Potentates of the World must submit and bow themselves? Though he sit in the Heavens, yet His Dominion reacheth over all; the whole World is filled with his Presence, he ruleth the Children of Men, and there is no safety but in his Protection, nor any Security but in his Favour. *The LORD*, saith the *Psalmist*, *is a great GOD, and a great King above all Gods. In his Hand are the deep places of the Earth: The Strength of Hills is his also. The Sea is His, and he made it: And his Hands formed the*



*dry-land.* Therefore he infers, and that rightly, *O come let us Worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for he is our God, and we are the People of his Pasture, and the Sheep of his Hand; Ps. 95. 3, &c.* If Men needed not either care for the *Divine Favour*, or much to fear his *Wrath*, they might be somewhat excusable, though they did not highly regard *GOD*, but seeing it is utterly impossible that ever they can be in such a Condition, wherein they stand in no need of *GOD*, or may easily protect themselves from the effects of his *Anger*, it is the most unaccountable madness to neglect him, and to be careless to please him. It is even such and greater madness, as 't would be for a poor Peasant or other mean Fellow, to slight or shew a contempt of some mighty Monarch, while under his Power, and within his Reach. None have less Reason to make Pretensions to wit, than those who slight *Piety*, and cast off all regard to *GOD*; because none act more contrary to common Prudence and the Principles of Reason. Contempt or carelessness of the *Divine Worship* can never be justified; unless Men could be certainly assured that there is no God, which the greatest Atheist never yet pretended to, nor can he? or else that they could extricate themselves from all

all dependence upon GOD, which as it is not desirèable, so neither is it possible. And therefore it is absolutely necessary, that all Men concern themselves in the Worship of GOD, and that they be carefull while they live to Own and Acknowledge Him, which who so Refuseth shall not pass Unpunished. They who will not willingly Own and Submit themselves to Him, shall certainly fall under the dint of his Fury. Now therefore, *consider this, ye that forget GOD, lest He tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver; Psal. 50. 22.*

### SECTION III.

*What Care should be had to Direct our Worship to the True GOD; Rules how to do it. Where also the Idolatry of the Romish Church is considered.*

**A**S thus you see it is necessary we Worship God, so by the same Reason it becomes no less necessary that we Worship the True GOD, which was the *Second particular* we promised to

to speak to. As *there is a GOD*, so there is but One True GOD, to whom and to none else we must direct our Worship, and our Religious Services; For if we adore any other then him, or make any Partner of our Worship with him, we are guilty of a Crime which is not easily pardoned, for it is a dethroning of GOD. And therefore, *Job*, saith, *If I beheld the Sun when it shined or the Moon walking in brightness: And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath Kissed my hand?* That is, if ever he was guilty of Worshipping the Sun, or the Moon, he acknowledgeth that *this were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge*: For thereby, saith he, *I should have denied the GOD that is above*; *Job. 31. 26. 27. 28. Sceptra non ferunt socium.* Kings can endure no Copartners, nor will God suffer any Rival with him? he will not endure that any should share in that Honour which is due to himself alone. *I am the LORD*, saith he, *that is my Name, and my Glory will I not give to another, neither my Praise to graven Images*, *Isa 42. 8.* Idolatry or the Worship of false GODS, is such an abomination, and doth so highly provoke the True GOD, that nothing will, or can excuse it; neither is there anything which he is more Jealous of: A Man's Serousness  
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or *Sincerity* will never endear his Worship, and render it acceptable, Unless it be directed to the right Object, Though one be a favourer of *Monarchy* in the general more than any other Government, yet he can never be counted Loyal, if he neglect his True Prince, and follow an Usurper, no more then he who is for no King at all. Even so though one be never so Devout and serious in his way, yet unless it be the True GOD whom he Adores, he is not to be esteemed a Friend, and Lover of GOD, he cannot be Reckoned otherwise then as an Enemy, as well as those who are altogether *Irreligious* and *Profane*. We must be sure then that we Worship the True GOD and none else, otherwise it is to no purpose to Worship any: For to worship none, and to Worship a False GOD, will be like profitable, that is certainly, they will be both of them hurtfull and pernicious: For either of them will incense the true GOD, and make him set himself against us to destroy us.

Now as it concerneth us to worship the true GOD and none else, so that we may be sure to worship him and none other, let us first Labour to get right Apprehensions of the *Divine Nature*, and *Attributes*. Let

us be carefull to keep in mind how he is the *Supreme Being, Eternal, Infinite and Independent* from all others, that he is *Almighty, most wise, most just, and good, and Holy; A pure Spirit,* who is not only free from all imperfections, but who is *infinitlie excellent beyond what can be apprehended, and who is every where present.* For as the *Apostle* saith, *he is not far from every one of us in him we all live, move, and have our being.* 'Tis this and nothing else which we call **GOD**, He and none other hath these Properties and Excellencies; And therefore not only what we Worship, must be such; but also we must be carefull to Worship Him under the consideration of a being thus *infinitely excellent and glorious*, or else we *Worship we know not what.* Instead of the *True GOD* we do but set up an Idol, which our own Fancie hath devised. 'Tis true an adequat Comprehensive Knowledge of God, or of any of his Attributes, is not possible; for he dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; He being *infinite*, and we *finite*, we are not capable of such an exact full knowledge of him. Wherefore it will not follow that One is ignorant of the True God, because his knowledge of him is imperfect, for the knowledge which the best have, or  
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can have is no other. Nay farther, it is not reasonable to inter, that men are mistaken about the *true God*, because they err about these things which are deduceable from the right consideration of some of his *Attributes*, or because they have not right or true apprehensions of some of the effects of his wisdom, power or goodness. Every one is not capable of drawing proper consequences from truths, and the consequences are not always so clear as the truth it self; it would be too severe to charge one with the denial of a truth, because he does not close with what may follow upon it: Unless the one be as clear and evident as the other, when two things are not a like evident, neither their connexion very palpable, though in themselves they may be really inseparable, Men may err very innocently and excusably about them; and cannot be said to reject what is evident, because they do not hold the other which is not so. As to the *present case*, that God is *Almighty, Wise, Just, Holy, & Good*, is clear and demonstrable, so that they are altogether inexcusable who do not believe it: But the most proper methods and manner of exercising his *Power, Wisdom, and Justice, &c.* Are not so discernable by us, and therefore if men differ about them, it is no great

wonder ; and it savours somewhat of arrogancie, to offer to determine them too particularly. If silly Country-clowns were to speak of State Policie, and Regal Grandeur, 'tis not to be doubted but that they would err grossly, because they have not true or exact notions thereof: But it is less to be doubted, that it is more beyond the wisest man's reach, to tell exactly what is futable to the glory of God, and agreeable to *infinite wisdom, power, and justice*. What boldness were it to say peremptorly, *God should have done or not have done this, & that if he had or not had done so&c so he would have acted unworthily?* What of the *divine actions* are plainly revealed, we see clearly are agreeable to the most perfect conceptions of a Deity, and what is kept secret, we ought rather to admire in silence, then to sit down and curiously resolve: And if men will need attempt the resolution of the hidden *mysteries of God's Councill*, and prescribe Rules for that end, they should rather be check'd for their bold and too curious meddling, then unbraid'd with a false god, because their sentiment cannot be so exactly adjusted to the more common notions of *justice and equity* which men have. Wherefore the deriding the God of the *Calvinists*, \*as one of late hath done deserves a severe censure and chastisement

¶ For whither these *Calvinistical tenets* \**Turners* concerning *Gods Decrees*, be true or *Defence* false, the believing or not believing of *his* them will not infer a *denial* or not own- *Sermon* ing of the *true God* ? and seeing the *about* *Calvinists* acknowledge all the *essential* *Necessi-* *Attributes* of a *Deity*, and believe in *ty* and him only who is declared the *true Freedom*. *God*, therefore they cannot be said to worship any other ; and he who mocks at the God whom they worship, mocks at the *true God* himself, and how great a sin this is, I leave it to any to judge. But to return whence we degressed, it is requisite that every one study to get the highest and most worthy thoughts of *GOD* , and it is absolutely necessary that they acknowledge what is expressly contain'd in the very *Idea of God*, as that he is *Almighty*, *most Wise*, *most Just & Good* *above all things*, and the *cause of all things* : For God is only a short term , used to expresse these perfections by ; and therefore who takes any of *them* away, destroys the very *nature of God*; and who worships what he doth not ascribe these properties to, worships not *God*, but some other thing. Even as he is altogether ignorant of a *circle* or *triangle*, who does not consider the one , as a *figure* made up of three lines with three *distinct angles* ; and the

other of one round line, whose parts are all equally distant from the center; who knows not this, is quite destitute of the notion of these figures: But if one knows this much, he cannot but be said to have the right notion of a *circle* and *triangle*, though he do not understand all which knowing and skillfull *Mathematicians* demonstrate about them.

But it is not enough for preserving ourselves from *Idolatry* that we get and *maintain* some right *true* and *proper notions* of a *Deity*. Men may have these, and yet be *Idolaters*; in that they fix these notions where they ought not, and ascribe them to that which in it self is not God. Thus the *Heathens* were guilty of *Idolatry*: for many of them, were not so much mistaken in their *conceptions* of God, as in the application of their general *conceptions*, to the particular *objects* of their worship, when they spake of God (at least the wise & understanding persons among them) they shewed that they believed him a *Supreme Being* of great Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; and therefore they term'd him alwayes the *Sunnum Numen*, *Deus ter optimus maximus*. So that their sentiments concerning the Nature and Attributes of GOD, could not be so much found fault with as their gross absurdity in misapplying these properties,

ties of the *Divine Nature*: For some affixed the *Numen* or *Deity* to the *Sun*, others to the *Moon*, or to some other of the *Celestiall Bodies*; as the *Author* of the book of wisdom speaks, *they deemed either Fire, or Wind, or the swift Air, or the circle of the Stars, or the violent water, or the lights of Heaven to be the Gods which govern the World; Wis. 13. 2.* And though this was a *stupid error*, yet not so detestable as theirs who worshiped *four footed beasts, and creeping things, and roots and herbs, as we read the Egyptians did.*

They may have been misled into these *abominations*, through the infirmity of their Minds: which could not fix stedily on a thing so *Spiritual*, and so wholly abstracted from *Sense* as *GOD* is, without the help of *Sensible representations*, which might affect their *imaginations*; Wherefore, the better to bring *GOD* to their Minds, & that they might keep him the more easily in their Thoughts, they have devised such *Bodily figures* and *gross representations*. Or not attending to the *True Nature* of *GOD*, they have imagined that he was confin'd to some peculiar place and seeing none more Glorious then the *Sun*, or other *Celestiall Bodies*, therefore have at first only fancied these to be the *Seat of Divine Majesty*: But in  
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*Processe of time* have degenerate into the grosser belief of their being Gods. Being delighted with there beauty, saith the foresaid *Authour*, they took them to be Gods. And as to that *Astonishing* as well as *inexcusable Blockishness* of Worshipping Beasts, and Insects, and Roots, it might been occasioned either through a misunderstanding of their *Sages* or *Wisemen*, who treating of GOD have used such *Symbols* and *Hieroglyphicks*: Or else upon the surprise of some vertue and useful quality, or a destroying Power in thele things, which their Ignorance could not otherwise resolve by a particular and some more then *ordinary presence of the Deity*.

But 'tis nor our present businels, to enquire into the cause and occasion of Mens being guilty of *Idolatry*. The chief thing which at present we would have marked, is that Men may be Idolaters, even while their apprehensions of a *Deity* are not so very grosse: 'tis true the *Attributes and Perfections* of GOD, and the nature of things *Visible* and material are so inconsistent, that it might be thought none would take what is of this last kind, for the other; but 'tis as true, that there is nothing more ordinary, then for Men to Join in their opinions and *Practices* what are really repugnant and inconsistent

inconsistent together. Wherefore to shun all Guilt and Suspicion of *Idolatry* it is not only necessary to have some knowledge of a GOD, *how he is a Being, great and powerful, &c.* But also that we be sure of his *Deity*, whom wee Worship, and to whom we addresse our selves, by finding out in him what only can be appropriate to the true GOD, and none else. A Woman must not only have an esteem for her Husband, & a resolution to admit none other, but must actually take a care that she do it not, otherwise she does not preserve her Faith and Chastity: If one addresse himself to her, and She should admit him to a *Conjugal Freedom*, without examining whither he were her true Husband, or receiving any certain evidence thereof, she commits *Adultery*. So if we take any for GOD, and honour him as such, without sure and infallible tokens which manifest his Godhead, we draw on our selves the guilt of *Idolatry*, which is *Spiritual adultery*. If Mens minds had never been corrupted with *Idolatrous apprehensions*, if they had never turned aside, and devised strange gods, that is more then one; then it would have been sufficient to have directed our *Worship to a Deity*, for then all Worship would have been the worship  
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of the true GOD : But now that the World hath been, so miserably o'respread with Idolatry, and that Men are become so vain in their imaginations as to set up false Gods and to ascribe a Deity to many things; Therefore it is necessary that we be very wary, and not only Design to have our Worship terminate in the True, for who Worship *False Gods* intend this : But that it may really do so, we must discern what doth certainly particularize the true GOD, and as it were Single him out from all the false Gods of the World.

Now it needs not puzzle us much or put us to any great difficulty to find out who is the True, amongst the several pretended Deities; a small enquiry will easily determine the point : We shall not have well begun to examine, when it shall appear who is True, & who False. It is a speech of Tully, the Heathen Orator, *utinam tam facile veram religionem invenire possim, quam falsam convincere; I wish I could as easily find out the true GOD, as detect who is false* : But the one will certainly follow upon the other. Solomon at once discovered the false Mother, and the true by making a tryal of their Motherly affection and behaviour; So by examining the account of those Gods which are mentioned among Men,

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and the Actions ascribed to them, which of them are the most *God-like*, we shall presently discern both the *True GOD*, and such as are *false*.

These can be no *Gods* who have derived their being, whose Genealogies can be given account of, who could do no great thing for those who adored them, nay could not deliver themselves, who were acted with *Humane Passions*, and were guilty of *Grosse vices*, and who never gave any token whereby they might be known to be *Gods*; But are meerly supported by *Poeticall Fictions*, and the imaginations of Men. And so *Jupiter* and *Saturne*, and *Apollo*, and *all the ancient and present Pagan Gods* must fall to the ground; And in a word, none can stand but the *GOD* whom the *Jews* of old Worshipped, and who is still Worshipped and acknowledged by *Christians*: For what he hath done, speake him out clearly the *True and Ever-living GOD*, who alone reigneth in the World.

And as it is Man's interest as well as Duty, to Worship the *True GOD*; So this true *GOD* never left himself *without Witnesse* in the World, that such as were desirous, might know and find him, and that others might be rendred in excusable. *The invisible things*

of him, saith St. Paul, from the creation of the World are clearlie seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and God-head, so that they, who are not convinced, are without excuse. His Works which are every where to be seen, did point him out; but such was the perverseness of Men; that they withstood them: Because they were common and ordinarie, therefore they became ineffectuall, for bringing them to the Knowledge of the True GOD, and the retaining them in His Service. They lost memory of the Creation; and as for the dayly Acts of GODS Providence, in doing good giving rain, and blessing with fruitfull Seasons, they wrought litle or nothing upon them. And then he was pleased, to give other Signal and extraordinary manifestations of himself, which was sufficient to convince the most Obstinat and Incredulous. Thus to ascend no higher, he raised up Abraham to be a special and extraordinarie witness of the True GOD; none could boast of any favour from the Gods they Worshipped, as Abraham could shew from his GOD, as particularly that of getting a Son in his Old Age, and when the Womb of his Wife too was become dead by the Course of Nature, which could not be effectuate by any other then an Almighty



*Almighty Power.* And therefore it was evident that he was the True GOD who did all this; and therefore also all to whom the knowledge of this came were obliged to own the GOD of *Abraham*. And indeed we find that these *singular Providences*, which followed *Abraham* and his Family, did draw a Confession from these Strangers with whom they lived, that it *was the true GOD whom they feared*. See Gen. 12. 17. 14. 20 20 3, 17. and Chap. 26. v. 28. We have *Abimelech* confessing that the *true GOD* was with *Isaac*, and upon that account desiring a Covenant to be made betwixt them; *We saw*, saith he, *certainly that the LORD was with thee*; and he said *let there be now an Oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee; and let us make a Covenant with thee for thou art now the blessed of the Lord.* Nay such clear Testimonies were *Abraham* and *Isaac* of the *true GOD*, that GOD himself useth them for the Conviction of *Jacob* at this time, for upon his first appearance he call'd himself *the Lord GOD of Abraham, and the GOD of Isaac*, as you may see, v. 13.

As GOD made use of *Abraham Isaac* and *Jacob* to be his *Witnesses* in their time, so he continued still to use their Posterity; for convincing the World of the vanity of their Gods, which were generally worshipped

and to let them see that he was the *true GOD*, whom all should serve and obey : For, for this end he wrought so many Wonders for them in *Egypt*, did so strangely plague *Pharaoh* and his People, brought them forth with such a *high hand*, and used many and so great Miracles in settling them in the *Land of Canaan* : For being the Fame of these things could not but reach to all Nations & People, so who ever heard and seriously considered these things, might be forced to confesse that he who did them, that is, *the GOD of Israel*, was a great GOD, above all Gods, a GOD of Power and Majestie, that he was the true GOD, and that there was none besides him. What other but the *true GOD*, can command the Wind and the Sea, the Sun and the Stars, and all the Elements, and force them to obey his Word ? Who can make Night and Day when he please ? who can change the *course of Nature* ? and when he hath done so, can easily bring it back again ? but he who is the *Author of Nature*, and the *Creator of all things*, GOD blessed for ever.

Wherefore the *God of Israel*, whose Mighty and Wondertul Acts are Recorded in the *holy Scripture*, is the *only true GOD* : And who would be found worshippers of the *true GOD* must direct their worship to Him. All

who do not own and acknowledge him are *Idolaters*; for if they reject him, the *Gods* whom they serve and bow down to, are only false Gods, Vain Devices and Imaginations. Now who would be reckoned amongst the Worshippers of this *true GOD*, must testifie themselves to be such, first by owning these *special and particular Manifestations*, whereby he hath revealed and made himself known; For as these do certainly point out the *true GOD*, and make a distinction betwixt him and all false Gods devised by Men: So 'tis only Faith in these Manifestations, which must put the difference betwixt the worshippers of *false Gods*, and uncertain *Deities*, and those who do certainly adore the only *true GOD*. Hence it is that we find the *Servants of GOD*, when they spoke of Him, styling him by these *particular manifestations*; and when they addressed themselves to Him, having a special respect to them. Thus *Jacob* called *GOD*, the *GOD of his Father, and the fear of Isaac*. Nay it seems evident that *GOD* would have himself named from these *things*, and worshipped under these designations: for when he appeared again to *Jacob*, he called himself the *GOD of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar*; Gen. 31. 13, and thereafter we find Him  
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( when he required of *Jacob* the accomplishment of this *Vow* ) bespeaking him thus, *Arise go up to Bethel, to dwell there, and make an Altar unto GOD, that appeared unto thee when thou fledst from the face of Esau thy Brother; Gen. 35. 1.* GODS constant Title under the Old Testament, was, *that of the GOD of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; GOD that brought the Children of Israel out of Egypt;* and they who own'd not these Titles were accounted *Strangers to the True GOD*: There is now another Name and Designation given to GOD, *sutable to the Gospel-dispensation, viz. The GOD and Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST;* the Reason why GOD takes to Himself these Names and Titles, and will have himself acknowledged according to them, is because they are particular Denominations, and do more directly lead to him. The Title of *Creator is due to GOD*, and can belong to none other: but they who have worshipped *false gods*, have acknowledged a *Creator*; but who is the *true Creator of all things*, is only owned and adored by those who believe and receive the Revelation of the holy Scriptures.

They who attend not to the *light of the Scriptures*, and reject their direction, if they own a *Deity*, it is onely a *Numen vagum*, an *unknown and uncertain God*,

as the *Athenians* did. If **G O D** had never made any other *discoverie of himself*, then by this *outward and visible World*, then Men would have been only obliged to worship the *Deity*, according to that *Manifestation*: But seeing it hath pleased him to give *other Manifestations*, for the illustrating of his own glory, therefore it is Reasonable and Necessary, that these be acknowledged as well as the other, and that we adore him out of a respect to these *Superadded Revelations*, as well as out of a regard to the *Creation of the World*. And who do it not, are so far from owning the *True GOD*, that they oppose and set themselves against him. Thus certainly *Pagans*, and *Infidels*, and such as disbelieve the *holy Scripture of the Old and New Testament*, must be excluded from amongst the *Worshippers of the One True GOD*. Which I wish were more seriously considered; for many Persons of this Age, content themselves with the belief of a *Deity*, and think they have gone a very great length, by acknowledging this, though they deny Faith to the *Gospel*: Who are not convinced, By the *Testimonies of Scripture*, are as much without excuse, as they who will not be perswaded there is a **G O D**, upon the evidence thereof, from the  
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existence of other things, and the Wise and useful Order, and Harmonie, and Stedfastness which is visible in the World: for the rolling over the *production* of this *material World* upon *blind chance*, the attributing it to a *various tossing and tumbling of Atoms*, without any Guide or Director, as was the dream of *Epicurus* and *Democritus*, would be no greater absurdity then to think that the Miracles and Prophecies, and other things narrated in *Scripture*, the *admirable correspondence between the Old and New Testament*, and the *excellent Agreement* between the *Christian Doctrine* and the *Nature and State of Man*, when truly considered should not be of God, but only a cunningly devised fable. And as for the Truth of *Matters of Fact in Scripture*, there is as much evidence for them, as in Reason can be desired, and they cannot be called in Question, without overturning all *Humane certainty* every Man acts dayly in his *Civill affairs*, as much upon Trust as he is obliged to, by receiving and obeying the *Gospel*; So that *Infidelity* is a most unreasonable thing. And as it is unreasonable so it averts a Man from GOD: *Who have an evil heart of unbelief depart from the living GOD*; as the *Apostle* insinuateth, *Heb. 3. 13. Theisme, & Atheisme*, are somewhat of a kin together

ther, and he who is only a *Theist* may be very soon induced to be an *Atheist*: for though the *existence of a Deity* may be learned by *Natural light*; yet without the *Revealed light of the Scriptures*, it is hard, if not impossible, to discuss the doubts which may arise, from the consideration of that unequal, and as it would seem, unjust disposal of Men, besides other things which may be instanced: And without the help of *Revelation*, all that can be known of GOD by meer *Nature*, will not be effectual to counterpoise the *corruption of our Natures*, and to restrain us from following *Sensual* and *Brutish appetites*, which being cherished, drown all sense of GOD, and cast out all Fear and Regard for Him.

As Faith in the *Divine Revelations of the Scripture* is requisite to qualifie us for being *Worshippers of the True GOD*: So in the next place it is necessarie that we *adore the God-head* according to that *Incomprehensible Myserie of the Trinity*. Reason and Scripture both teach, *That there is but One True GOD*; For it is impossible there can be more then *One supreme Infinite Being*: But though Reason do not, yet Scripture doth declare, as plainly and clearly as it doth any thing, that in the *Unity of the God-head*, there are a *Trinity of the Persons*

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*sons, viz. the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, each of which is proposed to us as the due Object of all *Divine Adoration*; therefore who do not adore *all three*, and *all three as one God*, doth not adore the *true God*: For the *true God*, is this *Trinitie of Persons*, as he hath plainly manifested Himself, and manifested it for this end, that he may be so worshipped and acknowledged by men. That *the Trinitie* is not contained within that *Idea of God* which we have by *Nature*, will not excuse the disbelief thereof, when clearly revealed, as I suppose every one will find who layeth aside their prejudice. We are as much oblig'd, to believe the *word of God*, as the dictats of our own Reason; and when Men will not believe *God's word*, because their Reason cannot fathom the depth of it, nor easilie conceive the truth thereof, as in the *present case*, then they make an *Idol* of their Reason, and may be said rather to adore it, then GOD: Seing they will not acknowledge him according to what he really is in himself, which he hath also plainlie declared, but according to the appearance of their *own Imaginations*. If the *nature and essence of God* agree with their *sentiments*, they are very ready to own and acknowledge him; but if it differ in any thing from *these*, then they are *Stubborn and Refractory*.

*Refractory:* Which I may fitly compare, to thole who make a nice distinction betwixt the *name and Authority* of the *King*, and his *person*; the *King's Authority* they profess to regard as much as any, but however they are still *Plotting and Rebelling* against His *Person*. If one should take away *Omnipotency* from God, all would acknowledg that it is not God reallie, but a *fantome of his own devising*, which he pays worship too: For that is no God which is not *Omnipotent*. Now he doth the same who removes *Veracitie* from God: for *Truth* as properly belongs to him as *Power*: And therefore as the consideration of God's *Omnipotencie* doth oblige us, to believe that he can work not only above what we our selves can doe, but beyond our conception, for all things must be possible to him; so the consideration of his *Veracity*, obligeth us no less to believe all to be true, which he speaks and declares, though our *reason cannot comprehend it*. If God had pleased, he might have made the *mystery of the Trinity*, and the other *Mysteries of the Gospel* more intelligible; But then he would have wanted the homage, and acknowledgement which is due from our understandings, which the *Scripture* calls the *Obedience of Faith*, and which is no less *reasonable then the obedience of the will and actions*: He who doth not sub-



mit his will to the *laws of God*, cannot be said to own him or his *Authority*; Neither he who refuseth to yeeld *His judgement* to God to be informed by him: And the withdrawing the *submission* of our understandings will not be excused by paying the *obedience of our wills*; for *one duty*, will not make up the *breach of another*, which is as necessary of it self. Hence it is that *Faith* is so much spoken of in *Scripture*, and made so necessary a duty to the being accounted *Righteous* before God, and therefore also it is that *Abraham* is proposed for our *Patern*, who against hope, believed in hope, for being not weak in *Faith*, he staggered not at the *Promise of God* through unbelief: but was strong in *Faith*, giving glory to God, being fully persuaded that what he had *Promised*, he was able also to perform: and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness, Now, saith the *Scripture*, it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we likewise believe. By this rule *Socinians*, and *Quakers* will be cut off from the pretences of *Worshipping the true God*; for as much Reason as the one sets up for, and for as great *Pietie* as the other endeavours to make a shew of.

Thirdly



Thirdly that the True GOD may be our GOD, it is absolutely necessarie that we pay all divine worship to *Him alone*, and not share it among others *besides him*: for seeing there is but *One GOD*, therefore to have *more Objects of divine Worship*, is to be guilty of *Idolatrie*; and *Idolatrie* and the worship of the true GOD cannot agree together. It is certain, that GOD will not accept of their worship, who pay the same adoration to others besides him: Therefore the *First command* which He gave to his People of old, was this, *Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me*. Intimating thereby that the very foundation of true Religion, and the very first thing to be done in the Acknowledgment of the true God, is to resolve to *Worship him only*, according to what our Saviour saith, *thou shalt Worship the LORD thy GOD and him only shalt thou serve*; *Matth 4: 10*. This *Joshua* understood well, and laid plainly before the *Children of Israel*, in his last solemn speech to them, wherein he endeavoured to reclaim them from Idolatrous practices, that is, the paying *divine respect* to any other besides the True GOD, by shewing the absurdity thereof, and its inconsistencie with the *Worship and service of the true GOD*; for having bidden them choose whom they *would serve*, lest they might

might have thought that they could well enough both serve Him who had done so much for them, and others besides, he roundly tells them, *ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is an holy God, he is a Jealous God, He will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins, if ye forsake the Lord and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt; and consume you after that he hath done you good.* And when the People expressed their resolution to serve the LORD, that they might give a true Testimonie thereof he said to them, *Now therefore put away the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD GOD of Israel, Joshua 24.*

Some perhaps will say that these Passages of Scripture, do only strike against plurality of gods, or the Worshipping of false gods, with a neglect or contempt of the True, or the Substituting any in his Room, but not at all against the Worshipping of Subordinate Beings, while one Supreme LORD and GOD the Creator of all things is owned and worshipped. But to this it is answered, that certainly all is to be included in the Prohibition, which derogates from the Glory of the True GOD, and is inconsistent with the Worship and Service due to Him; and therefore among other things, this *of paying Divine Worship to any besides:*

*sides* : For who doth this , does not *Glorify GOD as GOD* , nor acknowledge that Infinite distance , which is betwixt him and all other Beings. They are guilty of *Lese-Majesty* and commit *Treason* against the *Person* of *GOD* , who either level Him with others , or exalt others to a *parity with him* ; and yet this is done when *GOD* is not *Honoured* above others , and that *Creatures* are honoured with all the *Acts of Worship*, and *Testimonies* of respect proper to the *Creator*. In the *Scripture* a *Covetous man* is called an *Idolater* , not that he sets up his *Money* as an *Idol* , falls down before it, makes *Prayers*, and counts it his *Creator*, but because it enhanceth his *Affections*, is the *Ground* of his *Confidence*; and that he cannot be more earnest to *Please GOD* , then he is to get *Money* and keep it : Now is he not much more an *Idolater*, who designedly, and of set purpose, payes all that homage and *Worship* to others which he owes only to *GOD* ; is not this to return to the *Idolatry* of the *Gentiles* ; for *their Crime* was, that they *did service unto them which by nature are no Gods* , as *St: Paul* tells us , *Gal. 4.8*. And in that he saith, *they did it when they knew not GOD* , it clearly implies that they who know him aright as the *Gospel* manifests him , ought not to do it, otherwise they  
walk

walk contrary to the Gospel, and dishonour GOD.

To guard men against this crime, God hath in Scripture declar'd himself, a *Jealous God*; like a *Jealous Husband*, who cannot suffer with patience, the least appearance of dishonesty in his wife, or any the least inclination to strange embraces. And indeed as a Woman would be guilty of Adulterie, though she did not quite abandon her husband, if she did but prostitute her self to another, and entertain him with the affection and kindness due to her own husband: So they are guilty of *Spiritual whoredom* and *adulterie*, who honour with divine worship any besides the *true God*; though they do not cast him off. As the Husband is not content, unless he have his wife's whole heart and intire affection; so neither is God, unless those who pretend to worship him, do it without reserving any homage or service for another. And as she comes at last to have her heart wholly estranged from her husband, who hath been too familiar with another: So they who allow themselves to perform *Divine Homage* and service to creatures, are at last altogether alienated from the Creator, when men are drawn, to worship any other then God, they prove wholly forget-  
full



full of him; they let those whom they intended at first only to be *Co-partners* to turn absolut *Proprietors* of their hearts and service. Wherefore who would take the Lord to be their God, must resolve to devote themselves intirely to him, and to have none other beside him.

Lastly, who would worship the true GOD, and have their service find acceptance with him, as they must not dishonour God by giving him *Co-partners*; so they must not make their adress to him, by the means of Images or such sensible or external objects, but must direct their worship immediatly to God himself, without application to any other thing for the conveyance of their worship; for this he hath expresly forbidden, and that worship which he hath forbidden and declared his displeasure with, can never be said to terminate in him, That He hath forbidden it, is evident from the second Commandement, where all sort of *similitude* and *resemblances* are discharged: And that there is forbidden, not only *Images* and *similitudes* design'd for honour of false Gods, but even also such as might be intended for the honour of the true GOD, appears clearly from Deut: 4. 15. where Moses saith, take ye good heed unto your selves (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day the



Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire ) least ye corrupt your selves and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of Male, or Female, the likeness of any beast that is on the Earth , the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the Air, the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the Ground , the likeness of any Fish that is in the Waters beneath the earth, and least thou lift thine eyes up to Heaven, and when thou seest the Sun , and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the Host of Heaven , should be driven to worship and serve them. In this passage not only particular Resemblances, but all kinde of *similitude* whatsoever with a design to worship it , is absolutely forbidden : So that there is not the least shadow of pretence, for the thinking any lawfull to be made use of. And that God not only prohibits the use and worship of *Images* themselves , and for themselves, that is to say, when the worship is made to terminat in the *Image* or materiall object it self ; but also when the same is used, as a means of honouring and worshipping God, is clear both from the due consideration of what hath been already said and likewise from the instances of the *Golden Calf* which *Aaron* made , and the *two Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel*, which *Jeroboam* set up : For they who worshipped these *Calves* were not so gro.

gross as to terminate their worship in the *Calves* themselves ; but used only the *Calves*, to stir up their remembrance of the *true God*, and their devotion for him as appears by their saying, *these be thy Gods, O Israel which brought thee up out of land of Egypt*, *Exod. 32. 4.* *1 Kings 12: 28.*

The reason why God discharg'd the worshipping of him , by *Images* and *external Resemblances*, or any kind of *visible objects* , and which makes this still unlawfull , is because it is a very improper and disagreeable thing in it self , and that which begets dishonourable thoughts of God , and which seldom or never faileth to make men guilty of the grossest *Idolatrie*. What an improper, and unsutable thing is it, to studie to make him visible who by nature cannot be seen ; and by materiall and corruptible things , to represent him who is *Spirituall* and *Incorrutable* ; nothing which we can make or fancie bears any proportion to God, neither hath any resemblance of him ; the glory of the best and chiefeſt creatures , is far below the glory of God ; and therefore it would be but a dishonouring of him to *Resemble* him to them , or to set up them as *Images* of him. To whom , saith the Prophet , will ye liken G O D, or what likeness will ye compare unto

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unto him? *Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and metted out the Heaven with his span, and comprehended the dust of the Earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a Ballance. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the Inhabitants thereof are before him as grasshoppers, he stretcheth out the Heavens as a Curtain, and spreadeth them as a tent to dwell in.* By what figures and similitudes then can he be represented? As *St. Paul* saith, *we ought not to think that the God-head is like unto Gold or Silver, or Stone, graven by Art and Mans device.* And as there is no truth in these resemblances which men make of GOD, so by making them they dishonour GOD, and occasion people to intertain mean and dishonourable thoughts of Him: they who set up visible representations of the Deity are said to have *changed the Glory of the Incorruptible GOD*; and thereby also the true dread of God, came to be taken away from among men. For by the meannesse and foolishness of Images, men came to despise the Deity which they represented; as some of the wiser and sober Heathens have observed. Farther the use of Images is attended with the grossest Idolatry; For who are accusom'd to Worship them, fancie something of Divinity in them, for they think

think good luck attends them , and that it bodes ill when they want them ; as appears by *Micah's* speech , to those who stole away his Images , *ye have taken away my Gods which I made, and what have I more?* But though one should never be so Cautious in the use of Images , and guard never so well against these abuses of them , yet certainly it is not lawfull to have them with a Design to Worship them, seing GOD hath expressly forbidden it , and that he hath declared he will not own that Worship , which is given in and by an Image or any visible form and representation.

Now by the two last Particulars, it doth easily appear how corrupt the *Church of Rome* is, and how much guilty of *Idolatry*, for though that *Church* professes the knowledge of the One true GOD , yet She both hath *other Gods* besides whom She Worshippeth , and also Worshipped the True GOD for the most part in that way which he hath expressly discharg'd , and which by his word we are assured he will not own. First the *Church of Rome* holdeth other GODS besides the True , for I may well call these *People's Gods* , to whom they pay'd Divine Homage and Worship : And so *Angels* , the Blessed *Virgin* , and other departed *Saints* ,  
Crucifixes



*Crucifixes*, *Images*, the *Host*, or consecrated *Bread*, and other *Reliques* are *Gods* to the *Papists*; for they pay to them *Divine* worship and *Service*, even all that is usual to be payed to the true *GOD* himself, they fall down before them, make *Prayers* and *Vows* unto them, *Sacrifice* and burn *Incense*, build *Temples*, and keep *Festivals* in honour of them, and in a *Word*, there is scarce any *Testimonie* of respect payed to *GOD* himself, which is not also given to them; and the service of these is very little, if any thing different from the service of *GOD*. Certainly some few subtile *Distinctions*, which of late they have set up will not put any essentiall difference betwixt the *Worship* of *GOD*, and the *Worship* of these other persons and things, so long as they are the same upon the matter. Nay though I should say that they served these more then *GOD*, I would not calumniat them, I would but speak the truth; For they pray oftner to the *Saints*, particularlie to the *Virgin Mary*, then they do to *GOD*; She hath ten *Aves* for a every *Pater Noster*; there be more *Temples* built to Her and the other *Saints*, and many more dayes kept to their *Memory*, then what are consecrat for the *Honour* of *GOD*; their *Altars* and *Shrines* are



are more frequented, and greater offerings made at them; and by many instances it might be made appear, that greater Privileges, as Indulgences, &c: are bestowed by the Pope, for their devotion to the Virgin and other Saints, then for the acknowledgement of GOD and of JESUS CHRIST. Thus what *St. Paul* said of the *Gentiles*, is applicable to them, even that *they Worship and serve the creature, more then the Creator, who is Blessed for ever.*

These practises are so palpably Idolatrous, so contrary to GODS word, and so inconsistent with the honour and worship due to Almighty GOD, that it is a Wonder indeed how men who pretend to Learning and Reason should go about to excuse them; They are so gross; that the very Ignorant *Vulgar* could discern them, if they were allowed the use of the Light: But alas poor People! they are therefore Industriously keep in the dark, and the word of GOD is hid from them, which would teach them the Haynous abomination of these things, and how highly displeasing they are to GOD.

How little these Practises of the Papists, in Worshipping of Angels, the Virgin *Mary*, departed Saints, &c: are to be justified, yea how much to be abominated will

will presently appear by considering the ground they are built on, and the reason pretended for the defence of them.

First, That whereon all *Saints* and *Angel-Worship* is founded, is the *Supposition* that they are *Agents*, and *Mediatours* betwixt GOD and Man, by whose moyen and Meanes, both *Temporal* and *Spiritual* good things are dispensed: Remove but this *Supposition*, and the whole frame of this Service will fall and prove an idle ridiculous foppery. Now as to this, first we say it is the same pretence which the *Heathens* made, for the Worshipping of their severall Deities, as doth clearly appear from their Writings; for we must not think, that they believed all whom they Worshipped to be *Gods*, in the strictest sense of the word: No indeed, they believed but *One Supreme LORD*, *One real GOD*, who created and ruled all, whom therefore they called the *Father of Gods and Men*. But besides him, they held several others, to whom they gave the name of *Gods*, not that they thought them *Uncreated* and not *Subordinate* to the great GOD; but because they were superiour to Man by their Nature, and made use of by the Great GOD, in the Government of the world, and the disposal of Humane Affairs. Not having right apprehensions

hensions of the *infinite nature of GOD* , they thought that he either could not , or that it was below him, to superintend all things himself ; but that he did all things by the intercourse of these *Inferiour Deities* , to each of whom they assign'd *Particular offices* ; giving to one the charge of the Earth , to another the Sea , to a third Fire ; some they appointed to be the Guardians of Cities, and whole Countreys, others of particular Men, and some were set over Beasts , in a word , there was no Art , nor Trade, nor Disease incident to Man or Beast, nor Passion, nor Vertue , nor Vice, which they did not commit to the oversight of some *Deitie* or other , which they failed not to invock , according to their various Conditions and Circumstances. By this it appears , that the Opinion which the *Heathens* had of their *Deities* , was just such which the *Papists* have of *Saints and Angels* , and that the One hath no other ground for the Worshipping of *Saints and Angels* , then what the other pretended for the worshipping of *Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, Mars, Vulcan, &c.* these *Dijminorum gentium* , these Gods of the lower rank & order. Neither can any thing be said in defence of the one which may not be alledged for the other. And in truth , it would seem

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that the *Romish Church* hath been so much in love, with that *scheme of Heathen Religion*, as to think fit to transcribe it wholly: for there be little difference in this point, except some change of Names, that whereas they Worshipped formerly *Juno, Jupiter, &c.* Now some more Christian names are set up to be adored. And though certainly the holy *Angels*, and some of the *Christian Saints*, are by far preferable to the best of the *Heathnish Deities*; yet it is no more lawfull to worship the One, then the other: for the doing either, is to *do service to them who by nature are no Gods*, which the *Scripture* condemns, Gal. 4: 8: And which they who are thus worshipped would abhor. If there were any communication betwixt us and the *Angels and Saints*, they would certainlie declare against the Worshipping of them, and would shew themselves so far from being gratified thereby, as to be highly displeased therewith. That the *Angels* would forbid it, we have good reason to believe, seeing they have done it when occasion offered; for when *St Iohn* was about to worship the *Angel*, who shewed him these things he sets down in his *Revelation*, he withheld him, saying, *see thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant.* And if *Paul* and *Barnabas* returned to

to the earth, they would no doubt as earnestly restrain men, from paying Divine homage to them, as they did once *the People of Lystra*, and that too for the same reason, even because *they are Men of the like passions*; for though they be freed from sin, and these frailties we are lyable to here, yet they are men still, they are *Glorified* indeed, but not *Deified*, and therefore not proper Objects of Worship.

But to return and to speak more particularly to this, which is pretended for the *Ground of Saint and Angel worship*. In the next place, we say it is a thing very *uncertain*, what use God makes of the *Angels* and *Saints*, what be their *charge*, and *office*, and what *employments* they are put to. We read indeed in the Scriptures, that God hath sometimes employed *Angels*, in the affairs of his *Servants* here below: But whither he doth this always, whither each *Saint* or *Angel* hath a particular constant *employment*, or what is the particular *employment* of each of them, is not reveal'd; men can only guess at them, neither have they any rule to make their guesses probable, and therefore there is no reason to worship them or to make any addressees to them. For *Religious worship* and *service*, should stand upon better grounds, than meer con-



jectures, yea I may say idle and fantastick dreams. What Ground of assurance can be given that *Raphael* is appointed for traveling, *St. Roche* for the *Pox*, *St. Cornelis* for the falling sickness, *St. Ioy* for *Horse diseases*, *St. Apollina* for the tooth-ach, and that the *Virgin Mary* can give all that either Soul or body needeth; I say what assurance have we of this? And if there be no assurance, (as certainly there is none,) what a foolish thing is it to make adresses to these *Saints*, for these favours which (for ought we know,) do not belong to them to give, but to other *Saints*, if to any at all; if men be desirous of the favours they seek, me thinks they should make application where they are surest to be had, that is, they should rather go to God than to *Saints* or *Angels*; for we are sure he hath all good to bestow, but what gifts are at their disposal, or whither any, is a thing we know not.

Thirdly, though all should be true that is alledged, that we receive good things from hands of *Saints* and *Angels*, and that they could procure us what we desire; yet this were no reall ground for worshipping them. For they are not the *Author* and *cause* of these things, which are thus supposed to come from them. Do not erre, my beloved Brethren  
 faith

saith St. James, every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and least we should mistake him, and think he included *Angels* and *Saints*, he addeth, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, James I. 17. *Saints* and *Angels* at the best, are but the means and Instruments of the conveyance of God's blessings, and therefore it is not reasonable to worship them, as we worship God. If they ought to be honoured with Divine worship, because God useth their Ministerie, in blessing us with *Spiritual* and *Temporal* benefits; then for the same reason, a Merchant or Sea-man may adore the *Wind*, when its favourable; and every one may worship his *meat*, for by the use of our *Meat*, GOD gives us the Blessing of Life: and it will not cast the Balance, as to the being a Ground of paying Divine Worship to *Saints* and *Angels*, that they are *Intelligent Beings*, understand what they do, and what good they do us, they do it with good-will; for if this were sufficient then it should be of as great force, for the Worshipping of the *Pastours of the Church*, or any other *Earthly men*, whom GOD raiseth up to be the instruments of our *Temporal* or *Spirituell* good. The Means and Instruments should indeed have a due respect,

but

but it should be far below what is payed to the *Author* and *main cause*; *Saints* and *Angels* indeed ought to be honoured and had in great esteem, because they stand alwayes near GOD, and are his *chief Servants*: But there is no Reason to equal then with GOD, by giving them the same homage, and paying them the same Acts of *Adoration*. A great difference should be put between the *Servant* and his *Lord*, *Ministers of State* and the *Person of the King*, and so betwixt GOD and *Angels*, and *Saints*; Which also shewes the insufficiencie of that other *Reason* and *Pretence*, which some make for the worshipping of *Saints* and *Angels*, viz. That hereby they do Honour to GOD, for though GOD would have them Honoured, yet he would not have them Honoured as Himself.

2. Some of the *Papists*, are so sensible of the absurdity of Worshipping *Saints* and *Angels* directlie, that to take away the shame thereof, they study to put another face on these acts of *Adoration*, which they pay to *Saints* and *Angels*, telling us that they intend thereby no more, but to intreat the *Saints* and *Angels* to interceed with GOD for them, which may be as well done as the seeking of *Prayers* of those upon Earth. To which it may be replied, first, that what is alledg-

alleged is not true. 2. That it will not excuse this worship nor free it from *Idolatry*.

First, the thing alledg'd in the excuse of *Saint and Angel-worship* is not true. For besides the *building of Temples*, the erecting of *Altars*, offering up to them *Christ in the sacrifice of the Mass*, which without the most violent stretching cannot be interpret a desiring them only to pray for them; I say, besides this, there is nothing more evident, then that their Prayersto *Saints*, is put up in as expresse terms, as they should be to *GOD Almighty*; and it is impossible for any to address themselves to *GOD*, more humbly and devoutly then they doe, Particularlie to *B: Virgin*; or to speak more highly of God, then they do of her; or to attribute more to the One, then to the Other; or to Petition the greatest Graces in more plain and direct Terms, as appears from many Instances in that office of *B: M: Authorized by Pope Paul 5*. There She is called the *Queen of Heaven, the most Glorious Lady, which is exalted above the Heavens*, and in that Hymn which begins *Ave Maris stella*, they bespeak her thus,

*Hail you the Seas bright Star,  
Who Gods pure Mother are,*

*Offenders*

Offenders bonds unbind,  
 Give light unto the Blind ;  
 Our evils clean disband,  
 All good for us demand,  
 Do like a Mother bear  
 Our Prayers, up to His ear.  
 O singularly chaste,  
 Whose meekness all surpast  
 Our sins, from us exil'd,  
 Render us, chaste and mild,  
 Grant that our life be pure, &c.

This as it is the sense of *that Hymn*, so it is *their own Translation*, as may be seen in that *English Manual of Prayers* Printed at *Edinburgh*, this year 1685. though it bear the name of *Paris*. See pag: 76. and least the citation of *forreign or old Books* may be discredited, we shal produce some passages of this *Book* which is lately emitted by themselves, and which the Curious may easily get a sight of; pag: 81. in a Prayer to the *Virgin*, after very high titles, they pray, *be thou with me in all my troubles, and afflictions, and in the hour of my death receive, I beseech thee, my Soul, and offer it to thy sweet Son JESUS, that for thy sake he may accept of it, and place it among the Quire of Celestial Spirits.* And page 85. in the *Hymn Memento Rerum Conditor.*

Blest



Blest Mary pre-ordain'd to be  
 Mother of Grace, and Clemency,  
 Defend us from our mortal foe  
 Receive us when from hence we goe.

And every where throughout the book they speak to her, and of her, as if she were a God-esse in the strictest sense. But not only they pray thus directly to the *blessed Virgin*, but to *Angels* and other *Saints*, as may be seen here. The Prayer to the *Guardian Angel*, *O Angel of God, to whose holy care I am committed by the Supernal Piety, illumine, defend, and govern me this day in all my thoughts, words, and actions,* pag 18. And as they sometimes bid the *Saints* only pray for them, so at other times they desire GOD to interceed with the *Saints*. Thus, *O Lord we beseech thee, that all thy Saints may every where help us, and while we reverently celebrate their merits, we may feel their Patronages.* pag. 52. and pag. 108. they amply recommend their souls into the hands of the *Saints, Angels, and Patriarchs*, that not only by their intercession but by their assistance they may be delivered from the *Prince of darknesse*, and from all dreadfull torments.

And if they intended no more in the Worship of the *Virgin, & other Saints*, why was that

book condemn'd, which was printed at Cul for the rectifying *these abuses*, which had crept in into the worship of the *Virgin Mary*, as the *Author* had been guilty of *Impiety*, against the *Scriptures*, the *Virgin*, the *Saints*, &c. And on the other hand, why was the book of F. CRASSET allowed, and Authorized by the *Provincial*, and the *Arch-Bishop* of Paris to be published Anno 1679; wherein as an *Antidote* against the *poysen* of the former, all is reestablished, which the most *shameless Adorer* of the *Virgin*, ever asserted; that an *Almighty power* in *Heaven* and *Earth* belongs to her, that nothing is impossible to her, that she can save those who are ready to perish, that she comes to the *Tribunal* of God, not as a *Servant* to intreat her Lord but as a *Mother* which may command Her Son pag. 28. Thus by what hath been said, and an hundred more instances which might have been given, did we not fear to be tedious, it appears that the *Papists* do more, then pray to the *Saints*, to pray for them: And that this alledgance is meerly a *blind*, whereby they may the more easily deceive such as are not yet fully disposed to receive the whole *Saint-worship* in gross.

But 2ly, though this were true, it will not excuse, nor free those who thus worship *Saints* and *Angels* from *Idolatry*. 1. Because even

Even this much cannot be done, without ascribing to them the peculiar *properties* of God, as *Omnipresence*, *Omniscience* and the *knowledge of mens hearts and secret thoughts*. If the *Saints* do not, neither can hear us, its a vain thing to pray to them and *they* cannot be supposed to hear the *prayers* which are put up *every where throughtout the World*, unless *they* be made *every where present*, or so *Omniscient* as to know whatsoever is done or said upon the earth: Which to say of them, is reallie to make them *Gods*, for the *Scripture* and *Reason* both appropriate these things to G O D only. Thou even thou onely, saith Solomon, *knowes the hearts of all the children of Men*; 1 Kings 8. 39: And it is *One of the proofs* we give of the *Deitie of CHRIST*, that he saith of himself, *I am he which searchest the reins and hearts*; Rev: 2: 23. Which would not be sufficient, if any other could know these save GOD only. Therefore there is a great difference betwixt the praying to departed *Saints* in particular, and the seeking the assistance of *good mens prayers upon earth*: For there is a free intercourse between us, and our fellow Christians here; but there is no means of *Communication* with departed *Saints and Angels*, who by their Nature are *finite*, and so confined to

one particular place, which makes it a very Improper and Absurd thing to call upon them every where. 2ly, the seeking the *Mediation* and *Intercession* of the *Saints* and *Angels* so much, , and the laying stress upon it, is *Idolatrie* in respect of **CHRIST**: For it is a robbing him of his *Prerogative*, and the cloathing others with it. It belongs to **CHRIST** only, to make *Intercession* at the right hand of **GOD**; for as *St paul* saith, there is but One **GOD**, and One *Mediatour*, between **GOD** and men, the Man **CHRIST JESUS**, 1. Tim. 2. 5. And it seems, *St Iohn* knew not any other, when he said, if any Man sin, we have an *Advocat* with the Father, **JESUS CHRIST** the righteous; 1. Iohn 2. 1. He speaks not of many *Advocats*, but of One, and that One to be neither *Saint* nor *Angel*; but **JESUS CHRIST**. It is an injurie therefore to him, and an Incroachment upon his *Office of Mediatourship*, which he hath purchased by his *Death* and *sufferings*, to establish other *Mediatours* & *Intercessours* besides him. And to say as they are frequently taught, accept O most Gracious **GOD**, by the *Prayers* and *Merits* of the *Blessed Virgin Mary*, and of all *Saints* the office of our service. See pag. 88. of the forecited book.

Thus

Thus the *Ground* of *Saint* and *Angel-worship* the *pretences* for it, and *all* that can be said in *excuse* of it, are altogether frivolous and unsufficient, and will not free it from *Idolatry*. And as it is *down right Idolatry* in it self, so by it the *worship of the true GOD* is shuffled aside: For men run sooner to *Saints* and *Angels*, then to God; and Pray more readily to the *B. Virgin*, then to *Jesus Christ*, as if the *One* were of easier access then the other; it is more ordinary for People, to commit themselves and theirs to the *protection* and *guidance* of some *Saint*, then to the *providence* of *Almighty GOD*; and to bid *some* or *other Saint* to be *with them* in their journey, and the Management of any *Business* for to speed them, then to Pray as *Jacob* doth *here*, that *GOD* may be *with them*. Wherefore if the *Pope* were as *true* to God and *Jesus Christ*, as his *Vicar* and *Viceregent* should be, which are the titles he assumes to himself, he would take Care to Abolish that, which tends so much to the *dishonour* of *GOD*, and which *estranges* men so much from *GOD*; especially seing there is neither *precept* nor *example* for it, in all the *Scripture*. The *Kings deputie* is very unfaithfull, and ill worth his *Trust*, who sits and sees *Customs* introduc'd, and kept up, which tend to the *dishonour* of his *Master*, and are like



like to juttle him out of His Throne.

But leaving the *Worship of Saints and Angels*, we come in the next place, to consider their *Worship of dumb Images, reliques, & particularlie the Cross*, which hath not the grounds and pretences of the former *Worship*. They cannot say that they are *Mediatours* betwixt God and them, and that they may interceed in their behalf; and yet the worshipping of them is enjoyned by the *Councill of Trent*, defended by their *Doctours*, and dayly put in practise amongst the People, which is so manifest that I need not stand now to prove it by instances. However I shall mention One concerning their devotion for the wood of the Cross; On Goodfriday, the Priest in the time of service, holds up a Cross, and saith, *Ecce lignum Crucis, behold the wood of the Cross*, and the People are taught to answer, *Venite adoremus, come let us worship*, and and so they pray to it, *O crux ave, spes unica hoc passionis tempore auge piis justitiam, reisque da veniam*; Hail thou Cross, our only Hope at this time, increase the Righteousness of the Godly, and grant pardon to the Guilty. Lest any think that the Cross is used figuratively for Him who was crucified on it, the following words will remove that suspicion *sola digna fuisti, ferre seculi pretium*; Thou only wast worthy to bear the price,

or

or Him who was the price of the World, In that English Manual (done at Edinburgh) there is a particular Office for the worshipping of the Cross, and one of the *Antiphony's*, is, *O venerable Cross, which hath brought Salvation to wretches, by what praise shall I extol thee, for that thou hast prepared the Heavenly Life.* Page 332. and the general Letany in that Office; is that GOD would deliver them, not by *CHRISTS* Death, or Passion, or Crucifixion, but by the Sign of the Cross. Thus as it is evident, that they worship Images, &c. so it will not be excused and justified, that they do it for the sake of what is represented by them; for as we formerly made appear, God hath absolutely discharged the use of such things in *His Service* & will not accept of any Worship or Honour tendered him thereby. The Images of GOD and CHRIST, should not be worshipped for themselves, for they are but *the work of Mens hands*; nor yet for their sake whom they represent, seing they have forbidden it: and the Images of Saints should far less be worshipped, seing it is not Lawfull to Worship the Saints themselves, as we have made out; and therefore the Homage which the *Papists* pay to Images, Crucifixes, &c. cannot be acquitted of Idolatry: How much the Heathens are accused of Idolatry in the Scripture for

for the *usage* and *worshipping* of *Images*, is known to all who read these *holy Books*? And if there was Reason to fix this Guilt upon the *Heathens*, there is no less Reason to leave it at the *Papists door*; seeing their use of *Images*, now is little or nothing different from the Customs and Practices of the *ancient Heathens*, as might be easily made appear, could we allow our selves to pursue every thing at full length. But as we said of the *Saints and Angel-worship*, that it was nothing but a *transcript of the Heathen Demon Worship*; so who are pleased to compare them together, shall find the *Religious use* and *Observance* of *Images* among the *Papists*, to be a perfect imitation of the *Heathen Idol-Worship*: for as to their Matter whereof they are made, it is the same, to wit, *Stone, Wood, Brass, Gold, Silver, &c.* as to their qualitie they are not different, both the one and the other being *dumb and senseless, having mouths which speak not, eyes which see not, and hands and feet, which can neither handle nor walk.* Nay in many places the *Images* honoured by the *Papists*, are the very same which the *Heathens* used, only the name is changed, thus it is said, that in the *Vatican Church* at *Rome*, the *Image of Jupiter Capitolinus*, stands this day for *St. Peter*; onely they have taken away

away the *Thunder-bolt*, and instead thereof have put the *Keyes in his hand*: but it may be easily discerned to be *Jupiter*, because of his *long thick and curl'd hair*, whereas all the other *Images of St. Peter* are made *bald*. And at *Bordeaux*, in the *Metropolitan Church of St. Andrews*, an *Antick of Jupiter* going up to *Heaven upon an Eagle*, served sometimes to represent *Jesus Christ ascending up to the Heavens*; And who doubts, but the same thing may have happened in diverse places? However the *Papists* agree with the *Heathens*, as to the Ceremonies and *externall Acts of Adoration* payed to *Images*; they cloathed, and decked and perfumed them; they kiss'd them, prostrated themselves before them, burnt *Incense* and lighted *Candles* to them, and carried them in *Pompous processions*, all which the *Papists* do: \* yea some not only See *Jur: Protestant-writers*, but of their own, *prej.cont.* undertake to prove, that the *Super-papisme*. *stitution of the Heathens*, never carried them so far towards the honouring of *Images* as the *Papists* have gone: And certainly, nothing can be brought in defence of the *Papists*, which may not as well be alledged for the *Heathens*: Nay except some few *logical distinctions*, which prove very frivolous, all the *specious pretexts* which the *Papists* make, for justifying their

Practice, are to be found in the *Apologies* of the *Heathens*. Do the *Papists* say, that their *Worship* terminats not in the *Image* it self, but is carried by it to what is thereby represented? the *Heathens* said the same. Do the *Papists* say, that they use *Images* only, to remember them of the *Invisible* objects of their *Worship*? So did the *Heathen* as appears from *Maximus Tyrius*, and some others. Are the *Heathens* taxed with a gross conceit, that the *God* inhabited their *Images* and that some divinity resided in them? The *Papists* entertain the same fancy of theirs, at least a great part of the *Vulgar* do, else what means the high esteem of one *Image* of the same *Person* above another? Why are tedious *Pilgrimages* undertaken, to visit the *Images* of the *Virgin*, or some other *Saint* in such and such places, when the *Images* of the same *Saints* are every where? How comes it that *miracles*, the gifts of healing, &c. Are ascribed to *Images*, if they do not think that there be something of *Divinity* in them? Therefore the *Papists* opinions and practices anent *Images*, are one and the same with the *Heathens*, for which they are accounted *Idolaters* in *Scripture*: and consequently all subtilties of the *Roman Doctōrs*, will not free their *Church*, from this horrid and provoking crime. And as both reason and *Scripture* declare against them, so they



they cannot plead here the practice of the *Ancient Church* ; for nothing is more manifest, then that the *Primitive Church* abstained from the very appearance of this *Idolatry* and *Superstition*, so far were they from practising it, witness that known Fact of *Epiphanius* Bishop of *Salamine in Cyprus*, in tearing a Linnen cloath whereon the *Image of Christ* was painted, which he found in the *Church*, lest it should be an occasion of *Idolatry* to the People, this was about the end of the *fourth Century* ; And about the *sixth*, *Serenus* Bishop of *Massile* brake to pieces all the *Images of CHRIST and Saints*, which were in the *City*, fearing the People who were then Declining from the *Purity of the Christian Religion*, should be drawn to worship them. And that the worship of them, was not at that time *Publickly allowed*, nor brought into the *Church*, appears clearly from *Gregory the first* his Letter to the said Bishop, wherein he hath these words, that thou didst forbid *Images to be Worshipped*, we praise altogether, but that thou brakest them we blame ; who would be further instructed in the Judgement of the *Fathers*, in this point of *Image-Worship*, let them read the *English Homilies*, where also they will clearly

see , the great Disagreement betwixt the present *Church of Rome*, and the *Primitive Church* for hundreds of years, so little Reason have they to plead *Antiquity*.

But though all should be admitted which the *Papists* say, for their Vindication in worshipping *Angels, Saints and Images* ; yet this would not free them altogether from *Idolatry* so long as they *Worship the Host, or Consecrated Bread* : For though there were no other Reason to tax them with this Crime , yet this were sufficient, which we come now in the last place to speak to ; And the rather, because they go not about to excuse this, nor do they collour it with *subtile Glosses*, as in former Instances : they do not cry out, that they are wrong'd and calumniat, when they are said to *worship the Host*, for they publickly allow it, and the *Council of Trent* hath pronounced an *Anathema* upon all who do not think the same Worship due to GOD, ought to be payed to this *Sacramental Bread*. That whercon the *worship of the Host* is founded, is the *Doctrin*e of *Transubstantiation* , or a *total Conversion of the Bread into the Body and Blood of the Lord JESUS CHRIST* ; and therefore if this Doctrin be taken away, or shew'd unsufficient it will clearly appear, that they are guilty of *Idolatry* , as some of them-

themselves plainly acknowledge.

Now as to the *Doctrine of Transubstantiation*, it cannot be expected that we should here treat of it fully and particularly, for this would carrie us too far from the design of this Present Treatise, and make it swell too bigg. All we shall say at present, is that there is no Evidence for it, no Ground to believe it, and consequently no Reason for establishing this Worship, which they make to follow upon it. If we examine the several ways, by which we come to know and to be assured of any thing; it will easily appear that there is no Evidence for *Transubstantiation*, no Ground to believe that the *Host* is the *real Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST*. All things are Manifest to us, either by *Sense*, or *Reason*, or *Revelation*, and what appears by none of these, is a groundless conceit, a *Fantastick Opinion*, which ought not be made the *Foundation of any Religious observance*, and such will the *Doctrine of Transubstantiation* be found to be: For first if we examine our Senses, and believe their Testimonie: there is no *Transubstantiation*, but the *Bread* continues *Bread* after consecration; the *Figure*, *Shape*, *ClLOUR*, *smell* and *Taste*, are the same were before; and if it be kept any while it moulds and corrupts as  
Bread

Bread, so that to the appearance of Sense there is nothing but Bread. And if we have recourse to Reason, it will not contradict, but confirm the *Testimony of our Sense*; And farther shew what an absurdity it is to think otherways: because it would, quite destroy the *Nature and Properties of Bodies*, if the *Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST* were in the *Host*; For then it would follow that one body might be in *Diverse places at once*, that Matter might be without Extension, that the Accidents, Effects and Properties of a Body may remain when the Body it self is destroyed, and such like absurdities; Thus *Transubstantiation* is founded, neither upon Sense nor Reason but is contrare to both. And therefore if there be any such thing, it must appear by *Revelation*, but it will appear as little this way, as any other: for there is no *Revelation* to be trusted, but what is set down in the *Scripture*, and they are altogether silent. What ever was the occasion of this Doctrine, sure the *Scripture* was not, for it is not plainly asserted, nor is it to be deduced from clear or *Positive Truths*. Nay the *Scripture* gives so little ground to fancie this, that on the contrarie, it speak so of this *Sacrament* as may assure us there is no such thing as the *Papists* dream:  
for

for it calls it *Bread*, both before and after its *Consecration*, and the usuall *Phrase* for the celebration of this *Sacrament*, is in *Scripture*, *the breaking of Bread*, which would have been a very mean expression if the *Bread* were turned to the *Body of JESUS CHRIST*. The pretext for *Transubstantiation*, from *Scripture*, are these words, *this is my Body*, which in Truth when considered are no Pretext at all; because none but such as are Prepossessed with the Fancy, could understand that to be the Meaning of them: such a *Mystery* and *Miracle* as *Transubstantiation* is, had need to have been asserted more plainly and clearly, that is to say in *Terms* which do more necessarily import it. The *Disciples* who used frequently to trouble our *LORD*, about the meaning of His Words, and to raise *Scruples* when he spoke of things far more Credible, it is not likely that they would have let this go, if they had understood him as the *Papists* do; if they had so taken him up, as to think that he said, what He Reached, and what they Received, and Eat, was not real *Bread*, but that *same real Body* which was before their eyes, they would no doubt enquired farther into the matter, and asked how such a thing could be: But having a little before, in the *Ce-*  
*lebration*



lebration of the Passover, heard our LORD say of the *unleavened Bread*, according to the *Jewish custom*, *this is the Bread of Affliction which our Fathers eat in Egypt*, they could not understand the Bread now distribut, to be his *Body* otherways, then the *unleavened Bread* was the *Bread which their Fathers eat in Egypt*, to wit, not the same reallie, but only the *Symbol* or *Memorial* thereof.

Thus it appears that the *Doctrine of Transubstantiation*, is a meer groundless Conceit, favoured neither by Sense, nor by Reason, nor *Scripture*, but flatly opposed by all of them: And so though the *Bread* in the *Sacrament*, be Consecrat to an *Holy use*, and though it serve for *Holy ends* and *Purposes*, yet as to its Nature and Substance it is still *Bread*, and therefore who worship it, worship not GOD, but a *Creature*, and a *dumb Senseless Creature* of it self too, which is as gross *Idolatry* as any can be. Neither will it excuse them, that they think it to be him who is their GOD: for then all *Idolatry* should be excusable, he who Worships the *Sun* should be excused if he fancied a *Deitie* therein; Mens Opinions will not alter the Nature of things, nor make that Justifiable which is of it self *Damnab*le, otherways the greatest Crimes may prove no Crimes. Nor will

will it acquit the *Papists* of *Idolatry* in worshipping the *Host*, that they intend therein to worship **JESUS CHRIST**, seing their Worship is directed immediatly to another thing; otherwayes the *Israelites*, who worshipped the *Golden calf*, might upon the same account be freed of *Idolatry*. And yet the *Papists* in worshipping the *Sacramental Bread*, are more gross then the *Israelites* in worshipping the *Golden calf*: For they made not the *Calf* their **GOD**, neither did they terminat their worship in the *Calf* it self, but used it only as the means of conveying their Worship to the true **GOD**. Whereas the *Papists* believe the *Bread* in the *Sacrament*, to be the very **LORD JESUS CHRIST** himself, and do terminat their Worship in the very *Sacrament* it self. Then which I hardly think there can be a grosser instance of *Idolatry* produced from among the *Heathens* whither *Ancient* or *Modern*: “It

“saith *Coster*, a *Popish-Writter*, the See Still-  
 “*Doctrine* of *Transubstantiation* be not ling:

“true, the *Idolatry* of the *Heathens* Idolatry

“in *Worshipping* some *Golden* or *Silver*

“*statue*, or any *Image* of their *Gods*, or the

“*Laplanders* *Worshipping* a *red cloath*, or the

“*Egyptians* an *Animal*, is more excusable

“then that of *Christians* *Worshipping* a bit of

H h

bread

bread". And another of them saith, *that if there be nothing but bread in the Eucharist, they are all Idolaters.* Thus they confels, that it is the *Supposition of Transubstantiation* only, which can vindicat them from the *grossest Idolatry*: but that there is no such thing to be supposed, we have already proved, and they who will needs believe a thing not only without all ground, but contrarie to all Evidence of Sense, Reason and Scripture, their Errour is wilfull, and neither is it to be excused, nor the Practises which they build thereupon to be Extenuated. And it will be to little purpose here, to have recourse to the Fathers for the Defence of this Opinion; for first, we are not obliedged to believe any of them contrary to Sense, Reason and Scripture. And secondly, it hath been frequently shewed that they say no such thing, for untill about the *Eight or Ninth Century* this Opinion did not creep into the Church, it only entered in with the *Worship of Images*, for which among several others, see a late discourse of *Transubstantiation*.

But though there were ground for the *Doctrine of Transubstantiation*, and that CHRIST should be really in the *Sacrament*, as the *Papists* imagine; yet according to their Principles, it is scarce possible, yea I may say altogether impossible, to know

certainly, or to have any assurance, when the *Bread* is truly *Transubstantiated*, or that *CHRIST* is Really in the *Sacrament*: and therefore who Adore it run alwayes the Hazard of committing the *grossest Idolatry*, which is the most *Heinous of Crimes*. According to the Principles of the *Romish Church*, there can be no *Transubstantiation*, if the *Elements* be not prepared of due matter, viz. The Bread of true Wheat, and the Wine of ripe Grapes, and neither of them any wayes spoiled or corrupted; if the *Priest* who Celebrats, be not a true *Priest*, that is to say, *Rightly ordained*, and according to them, a great many things are requisite to make ones Ordination valid, and it is not possible to know when they are wanting or when they are present, but thought he should be a *True Priest*, yet if he intend not seriously the *Consecration of the Sacrament*, or doth not pronounce the words, or doth not pronounce them right, but doth either mangle or transpose them, in all these cases, there is no *Transubstantiation*, neither is there any difference betwixt the *Elements of Bread and Wine* which seems to be consecrat, and common *Bread and Wine*. And therefore it is impossible to know, when the *Bread* is *Transubstantiated*, or when not, when *CHRIST* is really



present, and when he is absent; for it is one to an hundred, but some one or other of these necessarie conditions of a right Consecration is wanting; and therefore also who adore the *Sacrament*, can never be certain that they adore JESUS CHRIST really, but instead of him, may be paying Divine worship to a *meer creature*, to lifeless Bread and Wine, which may perplex the minds and consciences of such as seriously consider the heinousness of the crime of *Idolatry*. To evade this Difficultie, they tell us that the *Adoration of the Sacrament* is always with the supposition of *Christ's presence*, that they adore the Bread upon this condition, that it is the *Body of JESUS CHRIST*: But this is a fillie evasion, and will never free their *Church* of *Idolatry*; for it is only *Doctours* or the Learned who may use these subtilties; as for the *Vulgar* they do not make any such supposition, nor do they worship the *Sacrament* with any such *salvo*. And besides, both the One and the Other pay the same *Adoration* when it is no *Sacrament*, as when it is: for without any scruple, they worship alwayes and every where the *Bread* which is pretended to be *Consecration*, when it is certain sometimes, nay oftentimes, it is not *Transubstantiated into the Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST*, because of the want of those necessary condition



ditions which infer that change. And when it is but *simple Bread*, will it take off the guilt of *Idolatry*, to say, *I worship thee if thou art CHRIST*? Which is, as if a *Woman* should pretend to excuse her *Adultery*, by saying when she admitted a stranger, *I do this if thou art mine Husband*. A woman is not honest and faithfull, if she embrace another upon light pretences and appearances; she should be alwayes certain, that he is her *real Husband* to whom she payes the duty of a wife: in like manner, none are faithfull to God, who throw away the worship due to him only, upon uncertain objects. *He is a jealous GOD*, as jealous of his glory as any earthly *Husband* is of his honour, and therefore will never be pleased with us, if we worship *rashly*, when we are not sure that it is him we worship. Thus though it were granted, that the *Bread and Wine* should be turned into the *Body and Bloud of Jesus Christ*, yet seeing it is so uncertain when it is *de facto* thus turned, it is much safer not to worship then to worship: because there is no crime in not worshipping, but by worshipping we may run the hazard of *Idolatry*. No *King* would find fault with one that were blind or half blind, for not falling down and paying homage to him, when he were Ignorant of his presence. But if such a one,

one, upon presumption of the King's presence should prostrate himself before the empty *Chair of State*, or mistake a *Courteour* for the *King*, and accost him with all the *Titles of Sovereignty*, and pay him all the respect proper to *Kings*, both he should render himself ridiculous in the sight of all, and also what he did would be altogether vain and unprofitable; for it would find no acceptance with the King, nay would very readily displease and incense him, because it would imply that the *Majesty* of the *King*, were as much to be seen in others as in himself. The *case* is the same in the *Sacrament* which any one may easily apply.

But lastly, we shall suppose in general, that the *doctrine of Transubstantiation* is true, and also in particular, that the *Sacrament itself* is duly consecrated, so that the *Bread and Wine* is actually transubstantiated into the *Body and Bloud of Jesus Christ*: yet it will not from hence follow, that the *Sacrament* is to be adored, for which there is neither precept nor example in all Scripture. Our Saviour did not enjoin it himself, nor yet the *Apostles* after him, neither did they look upon themselves as obliged to this, for we read that at the first institution of the *Sacrament*, they received it in the same manner they did their other

ther *common Meals*. And we cannot conclude that the *Eucharist* should or may be adored, because it is said, *this is my Body*, even understanding the words *literally*: for if this reason hold good, it would follow that all things might be adored. The *body of Jesus Christ* is only the *object of adoration*, because of its *union* with the *God-head*; wherefore if we may worship the *Sacrament*, because it contains that which is *united to the divine nature*, we may and also ought to worship every other thing where the *essence* of God is; and therefore every *Stone*, and *Tree*, and *Animal*, all *Animat* and *Inanimat Creatures*, should be worshipped, for *God is in them all*. But to worship God in and by the *Creature* is flat *Idolatry*. God is not to be worshipped with a *particular reverence* to any thing, but either when it is expressly commanded, or when he sheweth there *visible rayes of Majesty and Glory*, and even then we are not to worship the thing it self, but God who sheweth himself *thus present* at it, as the *Israelites* worshipped not the *Ark*, but toward the *Ark*, and as *Moses* worshipped God who manifested himself in the *burning bush*, but not the *bush* it self. But where God or Christ is not present by such *visible rayes of Majesty*, there worship should not be payed; we are sure Christ dwelleth in all the *faithfull*, but I hope  
none

none will say, that every believer should be worshipped: so though Christ should be really present in the *Sacrament*, yet it will not follow that the *Elements* whereof it is constitute should be adored, no more then the *Manger* wherein Christ lay, or the *Cloaths* which covered his *Body* and therefore the *Papists* who adore the *Sacrament* it self, that which they see, feel, and taste with their bodily senses, they adore the creature with the Creator, and commit as great absurdity, that is to say, as gross *Idolatry*, as they who should have ador'd Christ's garments, as well as his person.

Thus whatever way we consider the *Sacrament*, and the words of its institution, whether we take them *Figuratively* (as certainly they should,) or even *Literally*, as the *Papists* would be at, it is clear that the *Sacrament* is no object of adoration, and they who religiously adore it, do service to that which by nature is no God, which is down right *Idolatry*. And as the *Papists* are most unreasonable, in looking upon the *Sacrament* as a due object of Adoration, and by entertaining no less esteem of it then they do of **JESUS CHRIST** himself; so they commit gross absurdity, and are guilty of unaccountable stupidity in eating, chewing, and digesting; and consequently letting forth to the draught  
what



what they have such a high Opinion of ; to believe it to be no less then the GOD whom they should adore , and yet at the same time to treat it thus seems most disagreeable and inconsistent : For this is both to elevate and to depresse it , to raise it as high as is possible ; and at the same time to debase it as much as can be. Adoration is the highest honour which can be payed , but it speaks out the greatest contempt of a thing , to eat and devour it. Wherefore I think it would be very agreeable to the tenets of the *Romish Church* , that the *Pope* should interpose his *Authority* to discharge people to treat the *Lord Jesus Christ* as they do *common food* , which is to put upon him the greatest indignity. 'Tis true , *Christ* hath said , *take eat this* , but that needs be no hinderance to the *Pope* to enjoin the contrary , who pretends to have power to alter and dispence with *Divine Commands* : *Christ* said of the *Cup* too , *drink ye all of it* , and yet this hath not hindred the *Pope* to take it away from the People ; and there cannot be alledg'd greater inconveniences in giving the *Cup* , then in giving the *Bread* to be eaten and chew'd. If the People saw the *Holt* only in the *Priests* hands, when it is elevated ; their respect and esteem thereto might be the more easily kept up : but nothing



may occasion more the vilifying thereof, then the allowing them Liberty to use it as they do the most Despicable food. It is said, *that GOD commanded the Israelites, to eat what was usuallie adored in Egypt, that the Egyptians thereby might be undeceived in their Opinion of the Deity of these things:* And if it may convince one, that a thing is no God, when he sees it eaten by another: how much more may he be reasoned out of that Belief, when he is accustomed to eat it himself; For as the *Heathen Oratour* speaks, *is any man so mad as to believe that which he eats to be God.* The Church of Rome therefore should either let go the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, or they should abolish the Custome of Feeding upon what, they say and profess to believe, to be changed into the Body of their LORD: for these two seems not to agree well together. There can be nothing more brutish then to adore what they eat, and to eat what they adore, whereby they make themselves and their Religion lyable to the greatest contempt and Derision. A proof of which we have in that known speech of Averoes the Arabian Philosopher, *I have travelled, says he, over the World, and have found diverse Sects, but so sottish a Sect, or Law, I never found, as is the Sect of the Christians; Because with their own Teeth*  
they

*they devour their God whom they Worship.*

By these Instances which we have adduced, the Idolatry of the Church of Rome, doth clearly appear; it is evident that that Church both teacheth to adore as GOD what is not GOD, and also alloweth to have *Comparters* in the Worship of the True GOD: Which we have the longer insisted on, both because it was pertinent to our subject, and also seasonable to the times, when Rome is likeliest to be so active by its *Emissaries*, to re-establish its *Authority* among us, and that so many fair and plausible things are pretended for the inclining Men to embrace its principles and practices: but whatever specious pretences be used, we may see by what hath been said, that there is all reason to avoid the communion of that Church, whose communion cannot be kept, without drawing on our selves the guilt of Idolatry, and the having accession thereto in others.

Now that we may draw to a Conclusion of this Section; seeing the Knowledge and Worship of the True GOD is so necessary, and that all Worship is in vain which is not particularly directed to Him, what matter of Thankfulness have we that our Lot hath been in these Times, and in these places where we may so easily come to the Knowledge of the

*true GOD*, and what way to find acceptance in his sight. If we had been born in former Times, or in many other Places of the World, we might have remained for ever without the *true knowledge of GOD*, and so without all Hopes of true Felicity. It was once matter of Praise to a Poor-man, when he passed by a *Toad*, or some other *Venemous Creature*, that *GOD* had made him a Man, and not so *Vile a Beast*: But truly it should stir up greater Thankfulness in us, that *GOD* hath not left us to wander after the Foolish and Ignorant Devices of our own Hearts, nor to be involved into the *Idolatrous Abominations* of such as know not *GOD*, which should have Deformed and Debased our Natures, and rendred us more ugly and loathsome in the sight of *GOD*, then such *Vile creatures* are in our sight. Blessed be *GOD*, who hath sent us the *Light of the Gospel*, which hath dispelled the *Darkness of Heathenish superstition and Idolatry*, and drawn us from the *Service of those who by Nature are no gods*, which could have been no wayes Profitable to us, but many wayes Hurtfull. This is a Blessing for which we can never be enough Thankfull, and if we have a right Sense thereof we will value it above all Blessings. Many *Heathens* and *Infidels* indeed enjoy

enjoy a *Pleasanter* soil, their Countrey perhaps affords them rich Mines of Gold and Silver, and abundance of Wines and Spices, which we want: But yet we have no reason to envy them upon that account, or to think them happier then we, seing we have that which brings us better then a *Temporal Happiness*, even *Eternal Life*: for *this is Life Eternal, that they might know thee, the only true GOD, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; John 17: 3.*

Now if we look upon this Knowledge of the true GOD as any Happiness, let us Praise and Highly esteem it and testifie the same, first, by taking a care to get and to keep this Knowledge: for they slight and despise a thing who are careless of it, and readie to prefer any other thing to it. It might have been expected, that there should have been no need, of *exhorting People to seek after the knowledge of GOD*; but that ere this time, every one both *Old and Young, Great and Small* would have abundantly known Him, seing we have so many good Occasions of acquiring this Knowledge; But alas! the contrary is very much to be seen, our knowledge of God is not answerable to the means of instruction, we have amongst us, some can give so little account of



of what is known of God either by Nature or Revelation, that one might imagine they had been alwayes tedder'd in the *deserts of Arabia*, and not bred up in the *green Pastures of Brittain*. There is generally gross ignorance of God, and little desire to know him; every thing even the most trifling shuffles aside, and diverts from the *knowledge of GOD*, and all things are hotly pursued except this, which (though People will not *avow it*, yet) do speak out a contempt and undervaluing thereof. The Prophet tells us, *that God had a controversie with Israel, because there was not knowledge of God in the Land; Hos: 4: 1.* and surely we have reason to think, that his controversie with us will be no lesse, seeing besides our lake of this knowledge, we do but despise it, in that we neither much desire it nor endeavour after it. God hath given *clear manifestations of himself*, but some will not believe them, and others are careless to be acquainted with them, *loving darkness rather then light*, which in Truth is to love their *Milery*, rather then their *Happines*: For certainly this *inner darkness* of the Mind will bring on *outer and Eternall darkness*; who are without the *knowledge of God* here, shall be debarred *His presence hereafter*, especially considering that their *ignorance* is wilfull and without excuse.



2ly. As we ought to shew our regard for, and estimation of the True GOD, by taking care to get and maintain the same, so likewise by walking worthy of it, in studying to Glorifie Him whom we thus profess to know, otherwayes we shall but make our guilt and condemnation the greater. It will not avail us much to profess GOD with our Mouths, if we deny him by our works; to acknowledge him with our tongues, but not with our deeds and actions; if our knowledge of God doth not lead and excite us to the honouring of him, it will prove much to our hurt and dammage; as we may learn from, Rom: 1. where we see, what plagues and judgements God gave them up to, who when they knew God, did not glorifie him as God, neither were thankful. It is said, he gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient, that they all might be damn'd who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, as we have it; 2Thes: 2. 12 Seing therefore we have found out the True GOD, and that he hath revealed himself to us, let us not slight or neglect him, and be careless to please him, But let us with all Readiness and Cheerfulness, pay that Homage, Worship and Service which is due unto him. To shew which, was the third Particular we promised to speak to, and we

we shall treat thereof in the following *Sections*.

## SECTION IV.

*Shewing what Worship and Service is due to GOD;  
and how we may come to know the same.*

**T**HE Knowledge of this is most necessary, for it is not enough that we find out who is the *True GOD*, unless we also own and acknowledge him, which is not done unless we pay him that *Honour and Worship which is due unto Him* : For as He is our Master whom we serve and Obey, and as He is our *Soveragin* to whom we swear Loyalty, and pay the *proper Acts of allegiance*, so He is our *GOD* to whom we give the *Worship due to GOD*, which can never be rightly performed, unless we know well what it is.

Now to find out this, we must proceed *Warrily* and take right Measures, otherwise we cannot choose but fall into gross Mistakes, we ought not to follow at random, the Devices and Imaginations of our own Hearts; for what pleaseth us may Displease GOD, & be unsuitable to his Majesty, and improper

proper for the advancing his *Honour and Glory*. Nor will it justifie and warrand any way of *Worshipping GOD*, that the same is observed by others; for whither we view the *old*, or the *present World*, we shall find that the generality of *man-kind*, have deviated much from the true way of worshipping God; they have set up various forms of Religion and Worship, which are not acceptable to God, because in modelling these, they have studied more their own several humours and dispositions, then what was proper in it self, or suitable to the *Divine Majesty*. Thus for example, the manner after which the *Heathens* worshipped God, was an abomination unto him; for how could he who is a spirit, be but displeased with empty outward shewes, with senseless insignificant actions? How could it but offend his unspotted puritie, to be worshipped by debauchery, and acts of filthiness and impurity? How odious to his infinite wisdom, that Foolish and ridiculous Gestures should be thought his Honour and delight? and how unsuitable to his goodness and mercy, to be courted with Cruelty and Barbarity? As *Lucian* saith, they rather deserve the name of *Impious* then *Religious*, who think God takes pleasure to be worshipped after that manner. The practices of the *Heathen* in their Worship, destroy the very Idea of *GOD*, and

check these *Sentiments* of him which we have by *Nature*: for they were the occasion of these *Poetical fables*, which made their Gods guilty of *theft, murder, adultery, and the like vices*; which *Fables* were again necessarily kept up, that they might the better defend and support that Foolish and unreasonable Worship, which was so far from holding forth the *Glory of GOD*, that it did only serve to beget mean and unworthy thoughts of him.

The *practices of men* therefore, is a very uncertain rule to walk by, as well as our own *Fancy*; and seeing men have differed about nothing more, then the *way and manner of worshipping GOD*, it would be a tedious task to examine their various sentiments. The *surest and nearest way*, to be informed where in the *true and acceptable Worship* of God consists, is to apply our selves to the consideration of the *Divine Nature*, and to search out his *will and pleasure concerning us*: for as when we are about to make *presents*, and to offer *gifts*, we do not so much consider what we our selves would be taken with, as what will be gratefull and acceptable to the person whose favour we are seeking; so the worship of God being design'd to please him, we ought

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not to seek therein the satisfaction of our own humors & inclinations, as what will find acceptance in his sight. And nothing will find acceptance with him, but what is agreeable to his *Nature*, conform to his *will*, and which both properly exprels the *glory of his Attributes and perfections*; So none can shew us these things but God, and if he doe not declare them, we cannot be sure not to erre: an expresse particular *Revelation* therefore is necessary to determine the *Worship* of God; for who besides himself should presume to order it? It is our part to set about the *service of God*, but it belongs to him only to prescribe it.

'Tis true something of *GOD'S mind and will*, and consequently part of his *true Worship*, may be learn'd by *Natural light*; for the will of *GOD* is founded upon his *Nature*, which never varies, but is still the same: Wherefore a due and serious consideration, of the *Divine Nature and Attributes*, might bring us to the knowledge of His will, and of what is acceptable to him: the *Dictates* also of *Reason and Conscience* being from *GOD*, they do teach us his Will. But though *Natural light* may thus teach us part, yet it can not shew all that is necessary; it is good and usefull so far, and ought not to be slighted, but it



is not full or sufficient, neither so very certain now, by Reason of *that darknesse* which Sin hath raised, which is too thick to be dispelled by *Natural Light*: yea, Sin hath so mingled it self with our very *Nature and Constitution*, that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish betwixt the *Dictates of right Reason and Conscience*, and the *erroneous sentiments of that Sinfull contagion*. And farther, seing wee have not kept our *First state*, but are become *Sinners*, some other Homage and Worship is requisite then if it had not been so: For it is not Reasonable, to think *that such as have offended GOD should do no more*, then if they had still retained their uprightness; another acknowledgement is due from *Traitors and Rebels*, then from these who have been always *Loyal*, els it will not be accepted. But what Homage Sinners should pay, or how they should Address themselves to GOD, cannot be known, unlesse he declare it: *Natural Reason* doth not teach this, for though it were cleared of its present incumbrances, it is only adapted to the State in which we were Created, that is: State of *Innocency*, and doth not serve to direct our behaviour if we fall from that state. Thus it is evident that some *new Revelation* is necessary to be superadded to *natural Light* both

both to confirm it and to supply its defects.

And what was thus necessary, GOD hath not withholden from Men; but as he made *Particular Manifestations* of himself to distinguish himself from the *False Deities* which Men had devised, as was shewed above: So he hath given *expresse Revelation* of his Mind, concerning the way how he will be Worshipped; that Men may not be to seeke herein, nor yet make an offer of what is *Abominable in his Sight*. The Worship of GOD is not now left to Mens *uncertain conjectures*, and unless they be Perverse and Obstinate, they need not perplex their Minds long with such enquiries, *wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow my self before the high GOD? Shall I come before him with burnt offering, with Calves of a year old; if we be truly Serious we may soon come to a resolution, for as Micah saith. He hath shewed thee, O man what is good, and what the Lord do inquire of thee. He hath given a sure, plain, and fixed rule, which to use the words of Moses, is not hidden from thee neither is it far of, it is not in Heaven that thou shouldest say, who shal go up for us to learn and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and doe it. Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou shouldest say who shall go over the Sea for us, and bring it*

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unto us, that we may hear it and do it; but the Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy Mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest doe it; Deut: 30. 11.

The *holy Scriptures* of the *Old and New-Testament* are the Word of God, as is witnessed by the *Divine Testimonies*, of *Miracles*, *Prophecies*, and the like; which could only come from God: who ever also considers impartially and attentively the Matter of them, and Manner of expression, cannot but acknowledge they are of *Divine Inspiration*. For as to their matter, they both teach things not discernable by *naturall light*; and also the *dictates of human reason*, could not be so purely and with such evidence held forth by any *meer man*, sure all the writings of the *Philosophers* come farr short of them, even in this particular: and as to their *Style and expression* it is so fitted to teach men, and yet at the same time so becoming God, and so suitable to the divine Majesty, that the *Spirit of God* only could joine these two together, and it is impossible for the Greatest Master of Eloquency to counterfeit them: So that there be *many evidences* of the *Scriptures* being from God, and as they are his word, so the *Designe* of them is to direct us in the *Worship of GOD*, and to prescribe *that Service* which is due to him, and will be accepted  
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by him. Wherefore who would be informed of the *true Worship of GOD*, ought to consult these *Holy books*, especially the *N. T.* even as a *Subject* to know his *Devoir* to his *Soveraigne*, would do best to consult the *publick acts and statutes of the Kingdom*; and who would *Worship GOD* acceptably must do it according to the direction of the *Scriptures*, as he who would shew himself a *Loyal and dutifull Subject*, must doe it by a careful observance of the *Laws and Statutes* of his *Prince*.

Some will be ready to ask here wihther *any service* will be acceptable, besides what is enjoyned in the *Scripture*; which I shall study to answer plainly and in few words. First it is certain that it is not lawfull to exchange the *divine appointments* with our *own devices*; for nothing which we can doe will excuse the neglect of *Commanded duties*, nor will be received in compenlation of them: we then truly adore GOD and own him, when we heartily and readily comply with his holy will and pleasure and as this will please him better then an *Ox*, or *Bullock*, that hath horns and hoofs, yea better then thousands of oblations and burnt offerings, so though we would doe never so much or so many things it would not please him if that were left undone



done, as *Samuel* said to *Saul*, *hath the Lord as great pleasure in Sacrifices and burnt offerings as in obeying the voice of the Lord ; behold to obey is better then Sacrifice , and to hearken then the fat of Lambs ;* 1 Sam. 15. 22.

Secondly , if we make the *acts of Religion and Devotion* which are of our own Devising of equall weight, and value with what is Comanded ; they are *Abominable Superstition*. But *Thirdly* , if these two be garded against , it cannot be said to be unlawtull or displeasing to GOD , to do things not expressly or particularly enjoined , especially if the end and Reason of doing them , be mainly to help forward that *Service* which is enjoined. This matter will be farther cleared by the following Example , if *some Capricious and Conceited Person* should either counteract or slight the *established Statutes of the King* , and resolve to expresse *His Loyalty* by new ways of his own , it is evident that he would not find acceptance with the *King* , though his aime be good: But on the other hand , if one duely observe the *King's laws* and pay the *Homage* required , and moreover out of the greatness of his Affection will doe more or something else, then what by the *Laws* he is tyed to , the *King* will not be displeased with him, yea cannot but highly  
favour



favour him. The very same may be said to the *present question*, only there is this difference, that all *humane laws* are imperfect, so that a Man may out-doe them, his *Actions* often may be better then the *Law*, by which he may pretend to merit at the *King's* hand: but the *Law of God* is most perfect and reacheth to all *things* good and *commendable* either in themselves or in Order to other things; and none have Reason to plead Merit before GOD upon the account of any thing they doe, For their *Actions* which are commanded fall short of the Perfection required, and if they do any thing not expressly or particularly required, if it be Good or Usefull any wise, it comes under some general Command, if it be not Good and Usefull, it is but a vain and unreasonable service, which GOD doth not value or regard.

Thus having shewed, that GOD hath prescribed the *Worship* he would have in the *holy Scriptures*, and that they do not worship in an *acceptable manner*, who do it not as they are there directed: It comes next to be considered, *what that Worship is which is there required*, & by which we testify that we own the true GOD to be our God. Now in discoursing hereof, we shall begin with that which indeed must

have the first place in our Addresses to God, viz. *Faith in Jesus Christ*, both as he is a *Mediator*, and a *Propitiation for sin*. Without this the *Scripture* tells us, *it is impossible to please God*; *Heb: 11.6*. And the reason thereof is clear, for seing we have offended God, and thereby made him our enemy, it is necessary that *our peace* be first made, before either *our Persons* or *Actions* can find Favour in his Eyes; and there can be no *peace* without the *Mediation* and *Intercession* of *some third Person*. When *Parties* treat together immediately by *themselves*, it speaks out an equality; and so t'would savour of great *Arrogancy* in us to presume to draw near of our selves, the *infinite distance* betwixt God and us, makes it absolutely necessary that there be some *Dayes-Man*; and not to acknowledge the necessity of *such an one* is to do a *dishonour to the Divine Majesty*. Now *Jesus Christ* is a *Mediatour*, and there is *none other*, by him we have *accesse to God*, but without him there is none; *I am*, saith he, *the way, the truth and the life*; *no man cometh to the Father but by Me*; *John 14. 6*. *There is not Salvation*, saith *St. Peter*, *in any other*, for there is *none other Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we must be saved*. *Acts 4. 12* When ever therefore we present our selves before God, it ought to be *in the Name of Christ*,  
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and all *our services* ought to be tendred in and by him ; according to that of St. Paul, *whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving Thanks to God and the Father by Him. Col: 3. 17.* for what is not done thus by *Faith in Christ*, is rejected as the *addresses* of an irreconciled enemy which nauseat and stir up wrath ; all the *Sacrifices* and *services* of *Unbelievers* are an abomination to God.

Therefore also, besides *Faith in Christ* as *Mediatour*, we must draw near to God, by *Faith in him as the Sacrifice and great Propitiation for sin*: for as the *Majesty* of God requireth that, so the *justice* of God exacteth this ; it being most just and Reasonable that they who do a wrong, should both acknowledge it, and make satisfaction for it, otherwise the *Injured Person* hath no reason to remit the wrong, or to take the *Partie offending* into favour. *Jesus Christ* hath made *Satisfaction* for us, by submitting Himself to the *death of the Cross*, because we could never have done it our selves but it remains necessary, that we by *Faith* give our assent to what *Christ* hath done in our name, and that by *Faith* we offer up unto God, this *death of Christ*, as that which is just and due to be payed unto him, for our offences and sins ; for without this, what *Christ* hath

done cannot be *imputed* to us, nor receiv'd as a *satisfaction* for us. For as in the *case of an affront*, when a *third Person*, understanding well all the *points of Honour*, is desirous to Reconcile the *Affronted* and *Affronter*, by drawing up a *writ*, in which there is an ample acknowledgement of the *fault* of the *one*, and a sufficient *Reparation* of the *honour* of the *other*; this *Writ* is only accepted and becomes satisfactory, when he who gives the affront subscribes it: but if he refuse to own and ratifie it, 'tis altogether void and null; neither is there any reparation of the honour of *Him* who is *injured*. It is Even so here, the *Death of Christ* is in it self a *sufficient atonement* for sin, and doeth truely repair the *Divine honour* and *Authority* which are affronted and injured by our sins: but it is not effectually to make our peace with God, untill we assent thereto by *Faith*; for untill that be done there is no *actuell reparation* made by us, what *Christ* hath done is his own deed alone, and can be reckoned ours no manner of way, and so no more valid then the *Writ* in the *former case*, which the *offender* neither drew up, nor yet consented to after it was drawn up. Thus it appears, how necessary *Faith* is in our addresses to God; for as it is only for *Jesus his sake* and by *vertue of his blood*, that we have liberty



liberty to approach God, so it is only *Faith* in Him which makes him become our *Advocate*, and a *Propitiation* for our sins in particular; Without *Faith* it is impossible to remove out of the way, the *wrath* of God due to *Sin*, and the approaches of *Unbelievers* will but prove their confusion and destruction.

But though *Faith* be necessary, yet it is not all that is necessary; it must indeed have the first place in our worship of GOD, and addresse to him; but after the acknowledgement of *Faith*, we ought to mind other things too, else we mangle the Service of GOD, and are very much wanting in that Worship which is due to him; As when a King to shew his clemency, hath *Indemnified* rebellious and *Disobedient* Subjects, It is their duty not only to come and lay hold on the *Indemnity*, and to claime his *Protection* and *Favour* and other *Priviledges* only by Vertue thereof: But also to return to the *Loyalty* and *Obedience* of good Subjects, and to be caretull to manifest the same by such proper acts and Services, as they have occasion of. So we are justified by faith, and have our peace with GOD through our Lord Jesus Christ; but this doth not absolve us from paying to GOD, what his Law and the Dignity and Excellency of his Nature require of us; we are rather the more obliged



obliged to set about carefully, what was our duty before our revolt, and all these other services, by which it may appear that we own and acknowledge *the LORD GOD*. Therefore though *Faith* makes our way to *GOD*, and rendreth our Actions acceptable to him, yet will not serve instead of all those duties we owe him.

We must first *Reconcile* our selves to God by *Faith*, and then by proper and lutable acts both of the *Inward* and *Outward Man*, endeavour to honour him, and to set forth the *Glory* which is *Due to his Name*. The worship in *the General* is nothing else but to *make an acknowledgement of some excellency in another*: Therefore the true worship of *GOD*, consists in a serious sense of what he is, and in giving proper & lutable expressions thereof; and seeing *GOD* is infinitely great, and powerfull, and wise, and good, &c: We are taught by *Reason and Scripture*, to fear and love him above all things, to trust in him, depend upon him, to offer prayers and praises unto him; for these Divine attributes of Power, Wisdom, &c: are not otherwise glorified, nor can we any other way shew a sense of them.

But seeing *GOD* is not only *Power, Wisdom, Goodness, &c.* but our *Maker, Preserver, and the*  
*Author*

*Author of all we have*, therefore a ready and chearfull Obedience is due to him; And by this especially we must testify that we own & acknowledge him. What Obligations are on Servants to obey their Masters, Children their Parents, Subjects their King, the same and greater Obligations are upon us to obey God: And so there is nothing more evident, then that we disown and reject him from being our GOD, whom we refuse to obey in any thing he commands. Now all the Commands of GOD may be reduced to two sorts. First, there be some whose reason is apparent to us, such are those which are discernable by *natural light*, and usually called the *Moral law*. The observance whereof is required by the very *Order of Nature*: for if we act rationally we ought to follow this Law as closely, as the Brute Creature do their Natural instinct. But besides the commands of this first kind, there be others Meerly Arbitrary, which God hath enjoined chiefly to hold out his absolute Soveraginity over us, and to prove our Subjection to him; These Divines ordinarily term *Positive Precepts*, and they are only known by *Revelation*. GOD never suffered Man to be without some command of this Nature, the Jews had many such, but Christians have few, and those few too are made

made very serviceable to the *great ends of Religion*, the *perfection of our souls*, and their *Union with God*. How ever though 'twere otherwise, they ought to be observed, if we would have it appear, that we *serve and Worship God*: for if it be a *part of Divine Worship to own Gods Authority*, as we have made it appear, then we ought to observe *positive Precepts* as well as the *Duties of the Moral Law*; seeing thereby we signify a *true respect* to the *Authority of GOD*, because there is no other Reason which induceth us to such an Observance. Our *chief motive to the obedience of the Moral Law*, should be the *Will and Authority of GOD*, otherwise it is no *Act of Religious worship*: but it cannot appear that our Obedience to that Law is for GOD, if we refuse to *observe the positive Precepts of Scripture*; for that Obedience is no *true Obedience*, which consider rather the *Reason of the thing* then the *authority of the Injoyner*.

Indeed if *Moral and positive Duties* come at any time in Competition together, then *these last* should give place to the first; for this is the *Will of GOD* according to that Rule, *I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*; that is rather then Sacrifice. But when there is no such Reason for suspending them, it is a great sin and contempt of GOD to slight or neglect

neglect them. It was by the breach of a *positive* precept, that our first Parents revolted from GOD, and which brought all this Masse of Sin and Misery upon Mankind; Which shews Divine Authority is affronted by small things as well as great, and that the Wrath of GOD may be provock'd by the neglect of *positive* Commands no lesse then of *What is Moral*. Wherefore they are grossely mistaken who think they are only concern'd to be what we call *Moral good Men*, and that it is little matter whither they observe the *positive Ordinances* of the Scripture. He is indeed no *true servant* of God, nor a *right Worshipper* of him, who is Vicious, and whose Conversation is not Honest and Righteous, for that is a *Weighty matter of the Law*: but neither can He be said to *Worship God*, who makes no Conscience of doing these *Acts of Religion*, which God hath been pleased to enioyne, to shew his Authority, and to try what regard we have thereto. One may be Chaste, Temperate, Just, Bountifull, &c: Not for God's cause, but for his own, because 'tis agreeable to his Constitution, and for his Health, Interest, Reputation &c: but who is all these, & also carefull to expresse his devotion, those otherwayes which are peculiar to the Scripture, gives a true proof that he owns God and doeth what he doeth only for him.

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Thus we have given a *General View* of that *Worship and Service* which is *Due to GOD*. To condescend to *Particulars*, and to treat of them *Severally* would be a *tedious Taske*, who are desirous must bear the pains to gather them from the *Scripture*; and they may be much helped herein by that Excellent Book, *The whole Duty of Man* : But for the present we shall only speak to *one or two points*, which may help to a farther understanding of the *Nature of Gods Worship*.

## SECTION V.

### *Of the Fear of GOD.*

**T**HAT we may shew more Particularlie, how and wherein GOD is to be Worshipped and Acknowledged, we shall instance, *first*, that of *Fear*. And here we shall not need to prove from *Scripture*, that GOD should be feared, it being so known and manifest a thing, that all who have ever acknowledged a GOD, have also Acknowledged that he ought to be feared; so that not only in *Scripture*, but even amongst all *Nations*, all *Religion and Divine Worship* is frequently expressed, by this one particular, the *Fear of the LORD*. And indeed it would  
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be very strange, if any should think GOD ought not to be Feared; a greater Paradox was never vented among Men: Fear ye not Me, saith the Lord, Will ye not tremble at my Presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetuall decree that it cannot pass it, and though the Waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevaile, though they roar yet can they not pass over it. Jer 5. 22.

And again, as the same Prophet hath it, Chap. 10. 6. 7. Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord thou art great, thy Name is great in might, who would not fear thee, O King of Nations? For to thee doth it appertain; yea it is a saying of that excellent Roman Orator, *quis non timeat omnia providentem, & cogitantem, & animadvertentem, & omnia ad se pertinere putantem, curiosum & plenum negotii Deum*: That is, who would not fear that GOD, who sees and takes notice of all things, so carefull and full of business as to have a Particular concern for every Action and Person in the World.

But as it is certain that GOD is to be feared, so by this we do not mean that servile and slavish fear, which makes Men only apprehensive of the hurt and evil which GOD may do them, and which such have who consider GOD only as a Being of great Might and Power, which he useth Arbitrally, with-

out considering that his Power is alwayes managed by his *Wisdom*, and determined by his *Goodness*. This Kind of Fear ingendereth *Superstition*, and doth as oft avert a Man's mind From GOD as incline it to him; *Plutarch* observeth in his *Treatise of Superstition*, that this ordinarily turneth to *Atheism*, and nourisheth it. such was the Fear of the *Israelites*, when they saw the *Lightnings* and heard the *thunderings* from Mount *Sinai*, as we read *Exod.* 20. 18. for it is said there, *when the People saw these things, they removed and stood a far off, and they said unto Moses, speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.* It was this fear also, which possessed our *First Parents* after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, they were afraid of God, and therefore they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the Garden; *Gen.* 3. 8. Nay, the *Devils* themselves are seased with this Fear, they also fear and tremble, but by doing so they do not please God, nor find any acceptance with him.

The True and Commendable fear of God is what we call a *filial fear*, such a fear as a Son carrieth to his Father, whom he loveth dearly, a fear which breedeth love and delight, which makes a Man to rejoyce in God and glad that he is; whereas the other fear makes one wish there

there were no God, and is inconsistent with love, and doth fill one with *dread* and *horroure*: Of which kind of *Fear* it is that the *Apostle* speaketh, when he saith, *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment, he that feareth is not made perfect in love;* 1: John 4: 18.

This true *Fear* of GOD, is founded upon his *Nature*, and doth proceed from the right Knowledge of GOD, and a deep Sense of his *Glorious Attributes* and *Perfections*. Some say, *Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion*, But it is quite contrarie; for the more one knows of GOD, and the greater apprehensions he hath of these *infinite excellencies* which are in him, the more he both *Fears* and *Loves Him*, and therefore it is we find that those to whom God revealed himself most, did ever *Fear him* most: *Abraham* and *Moses* seemed to have had GOD in greater reverence than all other Men, because they were most intimate with Him; and certainlie the *Angels in Heaven* do yet *Fear him* more than any the most eminent *Saint* upon Earth, because they see him more clearlie and know him more fully: For it is certain, the more ones worth and perfection is known it is alwayes the more valued and esteemed, and as there is no *Love* nor *Desire* of a good  
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unknown, so it is a small regard which any can have to the Worth and Perfections which they are Ignorant off. Wherefore that we may be possessed with the *true fear of God*, it is necessary that we get the *right knowledge of Him*, we must learn what he is, and how great he is; we must furnish our minds with *true and proper notions of his Almighty Power, his unsearchable wisdom, his infinite goodness, his unspotted holiness, his admirable greatness, his unspeakable glory, his strict and severe justice, and his Sovereign Dominion over all things*; which made David to say, *my flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements*; Psal: 119. 120. I say, we should labour to know these things, and should let them have a deep impression on our Spirits, and should ever bear the Sense of them about with us, or else we can never *truly fear God*.

And as this is the way to come to the *true fear of God*, so it expresseth it self alwayes in two things viz, 1. in reverence towards his *Name* and *Person*; & 2ly. in a care not to offend him.

First, if we *truly fear God*, we will *highly honour and reverence Him*, and that both *inwardly and outwardly*. *Inwardly*, by having him in a high Esteem, and thinking upon him alwayes with a holy regard and Humble Deference. When ever God comes in-  
to



our mind, or that we present our selves before him, our Spirit should be struck into *ear and awe*; we should lay aside all Vanity and Lightness, and become Grave, Serious, and Composed, as is futable to so *High* and *Holy* a presence. The serious Thoughts of God, should make us stoop and humble our selves and be very submissive; when we consider God and his *Greatness*, we should strip our selves of all Pride, and Self-conceit and look upon our selves, and all things else as little and inconsiderable; yea as very nothing, for what else are we, or any Creature, nay all Creatures together when compared to God. *Behold*, saith the Prophet, *the Nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the Ballance: behold he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing; All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less then nothing, and vanity; he sitteth upon the circle of the Earth and the inhabitants thereof are as Grasshoppers; Isai: 40, 15, 17, 22.* They who are proud of themselves, or big with conceit of any other thing, do either not know God or they doe little reflect upon him: for as the *lesser Stars* disappear when the *Sun* ariseth; and as the *Diamond* doth obscure with its brightness, the *Peeble, and counterfeit Stones*, when it is set beside them, so certainly when  
God



God is seriously considered and thought upon, he will make all things appear small and inconsiderable; the sense of his *Greatness* and *Glory* will cast a shadow upon the *Beautie*, *Lustre*, & *Excellencie*, even of the best of other things. The *Right fear of GOD* will not suffer him who hath it to be proud, but doth alwayes fill him with low and mean thoughts of himself, and with a *high esteem of God* and greater reverence for him; yea, also it maketh a Man to admire the least *Act of Favour* and *Condescension* which cometh from GOD. Thus we find *Abraham* humbled himself when he talked with GOD, and shewed what a *high esteem* he had of him, behold, saith he, *Now I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes*; Gen 18: 27. *Job* likewise when he had a clear *Sight of GOD*, he was base in his own eyes, behold I am vain, saith he, *what shall I answer thee, I will lay my hand upon my mouth*; And again, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes see thee, wherefore I abhorre my self, and repent in dust and ashes*; Job 40, 4: 42; 5. And when *David* had considered the *Heavens*, the *works of God's Fingers*, the *Moon*, and the *Stars*, and was drawn by them to the consideration of the greatness of the *Maker*, he presently looks

looks down with contempt and disdain upon himself and all Mankind, and admires GOD'S Goodness unto them. Lord, saith he, what is Man, that thou art mindfull of him, and the Son of man, that thou visitest him? Psal. 8: 4. Thus it appears, that the fear of God doth alwayes make us to reverence and esteeme him highly in our minds, and thoughts, and also to contemn and undervalue our selves, and all other things out of respect unto him.

But as we must thus reverence God Inwardly, by studying to have great & worthy thoughts of him, & mean & low thoughts of our selves, & all things besides for his cause, so we ought to shew reverence towards him Outwardly, by a Grave and Humble deportment of the Outward man before him: All reverence of the Divine Majesty must not be confined within us, it must sometimes appear without also; and certainly if there be much Within, there will something of it Kyth Outwardly. The Inward Thoughts, Sentiments, and Inclinations of the Soul, are alwayes to be discerned by the Outward behaviour; and therefore if we Inwardly fear GOD and reverence him, we will discover it both by speaking alwayes of him with great Respect and Deference, and also by such Acts and Gestures of the Body when we set about his Worship or present our selves

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before

before Him; as are proper to express and speak out the sense of that *Infinite Distance* which is betwixt Him and us: And so we read that *Abraham*, and *Moses*, and *David*, and all the *Prophets*, and *Servants of GOD* in the *Scripture*, used to bow down and fall upon their Face to the Ground when they appeared before GOD, or that he appeared unto them. Yea, GOD himself expressly required this of *Moses* and *Joshua*, at these *Manifestations of his presence unto them*, which we find, *Exod. 3. 5. Josh 5. 15.* For there he commanded them, to put off their shoes from off their feet, which according to the custom of the *Eastern Nations*, was then a *Testimonie of Respect and Reverence*. And indeed seeing we bear no proportion to the *Greatness of God*, there is nothing more Proper or Reasonable, then that we should Reverence and Exalt him, by such depressing of our selves and humbling of our Bodies in his Sight. The very *Angels*, these *Glorious Spirits*, are said to vail and cover their faces when they appear before God; And how much more Reason is it, that we be abashed and humbled who dwell in houses of clay, and whose foundation is in the dust. Certainly if there be any Gesture or Posture more humble then another, it becomes us to use it; and it doth bespeak

bespeak little Reverence to God, to use that Gesture and Carriage, when we speak to him, or he speaks to us, which we would not make use of, but when we were conversing with our Equals, or Inferiours. Sitting therefore at Prayer, and having the head covered when Divine Worship is performed, are very undecent and unbecoming things. I wonder how ever this crept in, or came to be in fashion amongst us; and I think it yet more strange, that there should be some who take upon them to defend that which is condemned not only by the practice of all the Saints and Servants of God, we read of in Scripture, but also by the Custome of all Nations whatsoever: For even the very Heathens, would account it irreverence towards their False Gods; which many Christians in this Country are not ashamed to do towards the True and Living God. What the Lord saith by the Prophet Malachy, in another case, will be very applicable here, a Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master, if then I be a Father, where is my honour, and if I be a Master where is my fear: offer this now unto thy Governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy Person, saith the Lord of Hosts? Mal. 1. 6. 8. Nay, to pass Kings and Princes, and those of the best quality, even the meaner sort of Gentlemen,



would look upon themselves, as affronted and uncivilly Treated, if they had not greater respect payed them, then what some shew to God: who would not be incens'd and provock'd, if his *Tennant* or any other *Poor mean Fellow* should thruss into his presence, without uncovering his Head, and sit down and talk with him? I doubt not but there are some, who would be ready to cause kick such *ill manner'd Persons*, to the doore; and I cannot see, how that can be reckoned as *reverence* and a sign of *devotion* to God, which men look upon as rudenesse and incivility.

There be some which very much mistake that place of the Prophet, *Isai. 29. 13.* Where the Lord complains of his *People of Old*; that *they drew near Him with their Mouth*, and *that they honoured him with their lips*, as if that were a discharge of all *externall Worship* or of *outward reverence* therein: whereas it is not the *outward honour* and *reverence* which the Lord there finds fault with, but only *that their hearts were far from him*: God values not the *Body* without the *Soul*, for then it is but a dead Carcase; he cares not for our *outward reverence* and *Prostrations*, when the *inward Spirit of devotion* is wanting: but as he calls chiefly for the *Heart* and *Mind*, because it is the *better part of Man*; so he expects that having



having the inward, the outward man will follow: and indeed what God hath joyned together should not be put asunder. The Apostle enjoyns the honouring of God outwardly as well as inwardly, when he saith, *Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are Gods*; 1 Cor: 6. 20. 'Tis true superstition is a fault, but it is not the best way to redresse it, to turn Profane and irreverent. God is not pleased with the humblest postures of our bodies, when our hearts and souls do not accompany them. but to make up that want, we must not turn away from the necessary and becoming testimonies of devotion and reverence: What our Saviour laid on another occasion to the Scribes and Pharises, I may well apply here, *these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.* Matth: 23. 23. As hypocrisie may be joyned to the outward acts and expressions of humility and reverence, so it is as certain that there is little true sense of God within, when the outward behaviour is not Grave, modest, and Humble: wherefore it is the saying of One, I will as sure believe him temperat, who is staggering in the Streets with drink, and him chaste, whose eyes are full of Adultery, & him mercifull, whose hands are imbru'd in blood, as that he can truly fear God who sheweth no outward reverence in his worship. The outward reverence of the Body, is not only necessary  
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to testify the *inward respect of the mind*; but it is also requisite for the quickning and stirring it up: as the *outward Pomp and Grandeur of Princes and Magistrats* is necessary; to put People in mind of their Power and Authority, which otherwayes they would be readie to forget, or to be too bold with; so the *outward Humiliation of our Bodies*, serves to cherish and to keep up in us the *sense of God's greatness and Glory*, which otherwayes perhaps would slip out of our minds.

Thus we have spoken to that reverence both *Inward and Outward*, which is due to GOD, which is always *One of the fruits of his fear*. The other effect thereof, consists in a great care and circumspection not to offend or displease him: And indeed if this be wanting, there is no true *Fear of GOD*, nor will any Reverence which we shew towards him find acceptance with him. As *Children* who truly honour and respect their Parents, are alwayes very loath to give them any manner of offence, and as they are grieved when at any time they chance to do it, though they do not *Fear* nor apprehend to be chastised; so such as are sincerely acted with the *Fear of GOD*, will carefully watch against all manner of sin, and will have an aversion from it, though there were no ground to dread Hell

Hell or other punishments; but even because that this is contrarie to him, whom they intirely love and honour: And when they have sinned, the consideration of the offence which is given GOD thereby, will afflict them more, then these bitter fruits which sin alwayes produceth. Therefore the *True fear of GOD*, doth alwayes restrain Men from doing these things that are *Evil in his sight*, and doth incline them to *that which is good, the fear of the LORD*, saith the wise Man, *is to hate evil*; Prov:8: 13: And again, *by the fear of their Lod, men depart from evil*. Chap. 16. 6. This is a great *Aw-band* over men, & will crub them more then all humane Laws and Authority: For such as are possessed with the *Fear of GOD*, will not only forbear gross and open transgressions, which may make them lyable to punishment from Men: but even also as much as possible Secret and lesser Faults, which the World takes no notice off. Thus *Joseph* would not yeeld to the enticements of his *Mistress*, though perhaps he might have done it, without being in hazard of a discovery, for he feared GOD: *How shall I, saith he, do this great wickedness, and sin against GOD*. Gen. 39. 9. And when his *Brethren* were sealed with *Panick fear* because of that rough and severe

severe countenance which he put on towards them, he encouraged them with this consideration that he feared GOD, as it he had said, *Though I have all power and Authority here in Egypt, yet you have no reason to be afraid of me, for I am not one who will abuse my Authority, and wrest my power to do Men hurt, and prejudice, for I fear GOD: Gen. 42. '8.*

When Men are not very carefull to avoid sin, and to do good, it is certain there is little or no *Fear of GOD* before their eyes, and they do in vain pretend it: How impertinent and unreasonable a thing is it, to say, we *Fear that Person* whom we never study to please, & whom we are careless whither we offend or not? There cannot truly be greater signs and evidences of contempt and disrespect then this, and it is impossible that we should both *Fear and Despise, Slight and Reverence* the same Person at one and the same time.

And hence it appears how little of the true *fear of God* is in the World, even among us who are called *Christians*, seeing there are so small endeavours to please God, Nay such a forwardness to displease him, by doing these things which he hates and Abhors, and which he hath so often expressly forbidden. It is a sad, but a certain Truth, that the *Mogul and Cham of Tartar*, nay some of the



*Petty Indian Princes*, are not only more honoured & feared by their own *proper Subjects*, but also may be said to be had in greater Reverence by many *Christians*, then the *true and verliving GOD* is: because they do not slight him so much as they do Him, their laws they do not so often violat, their power and Authority they do not so frequently baffle and trample upon as they do Gods; and it is certain their name is not so much nor so often profaned and derided, as the Name of the Great GOD; for some, nay many both *Old* and *Young* amongst us, are come to this now, that they cannot open their mouths without *prophaning the holy Name of God*, though he hath said expressly, *that he will not hold them guiltless who take his Name in vain.* Judge I pray you, if this be to *fear the Lord*, or if it be not rather to mock him, and to have him in Derision; for certainly though Men would set themselves to affront Him, they could hardly do it more effectually; And is this then fair and equall dealing by such as profess themselves Friends and Servants? Did every *Nation* or *People* treat the God whom they worshipped at this rate? Men have not cared to scorn and dishonour *these Dieties*, whom they did not own, but was there ever such a strange and absurd

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thing as this? That People should profess and acknowledge *One to be the true-GOD*, and yet carry no respect towards him, neither shew any care to please him: but dayly and hourly live in the greatest contempt of him. These things are so unworthy and so inconsistent, that I neither know how any can excuse them, nor can I find out any *similitude* or *comparison* proper and sufficient, to set off the madness and unaccountable absurdity thereof. To convince Men hereof, I would ask them what they do mean by being thus careless to please God, and why they do so easily offend Him? Do they think Him ignorant of their Actings? Say they (as *Eliphaz* speaketh) *how doth God know, can he judge through the dark Clouds; Job 22: 13.* And with these *Atheists*, in the 94. *Psal.* who say *the Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.* If so, hearken to what the *Psalmist* there teacheth, *understand ye brutish among the People, and ye fools when will ye be wise. He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye shall he not see? He that chastiseth the Heathen shall not be corrected? He that teacheth men knowledge shall not be know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of Man, yea he spieth them out a far off; he is privy to all our wayes: and there is nothing that we do, hid from him*

him, how therefore dare any presume to offend and to provoke Him? For God is a terrible GOD; and of great power, if he but touch the Mountains they smoke; when the voice of his thunder was in the Heaven, the lightnings lightened the World, the Earth trembled and shook. At thy rebuke, O GOD of Jacob, saith the Psalmist, both the Chariot and the Horse are cast into a dead sleep, thou therefore even thou art to be feared, and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry? Psal: 76: 6. 7. If God arise his enemies shall be scattered, they also that hate Him shall flee before him; as smoke is driven away, so shall he drive them away; as wax melteth before the fire, so shall the wicked perish at the presence of God. Psal: 68: 1. 2. 'Tis strange to see how wary Men will be of offending those who may ruine their Fortune, or take away their Lives; or make them miserable here, and yet at the same time, to find them not in the least afraid of exasperating God, who besides the punishments he can inflict in this World, is able to render one eternally miserable? and what a folly is it then to fear any more then him, and to be more careful to shun a small evil, then that which is unspeakably great? I shal conclude with these words of our Saviour, I say unto you my Friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after

that have no more that they can doe: but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear, fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell, yea I say unto you, fear him. Luke 12. 4.

## SECTION VI.

### *Of Walking with GOD.*

**T**Is the Errour of some, that they think the *whole of Religion* consists in some few *Externall A&ts and Performances*, which having done, they think they have acquitted themselves sufficientlie of the *Worship of GOD*: Thus for Example, they make *Religion* to be, to *Fast*, and *Pray*, and *keep the Church*, and *Observe the Sabbath*, &c. and by doing these, they imagine they have done enough, to set themselves up for the *true Worshippers of GOD*. But though these *Actions* be necessarie parts of *Religion*, yet they prove but dull insipide things, if the *Intervals* betwixt them be not likeways fill'd up with proper and agreeable *Exercises*, which tend to the *Honour and Glory of GOD*. To *Worship GOD* is not to perform a *Particular sett of A&tions*, but to order the whole *Life and Conversation* aright before him. Wherefore in *Scripture* it is generallie set forth, by the *Phrase of Walking with GOD*

GOD, thus saith the Prophet Micah he hath  
bened thee O Man, what is Good, and what  
loth the Lord thy GOD require of thee, but to  
do Justlie, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly  
with thy GOD; Micah 6. 8. It is recorded  
also of Enoch and Noah to their commendati-  
on, that they walked with GOD; Gen: 5.  
4. 6. 9. And it is a certain rule, that  
when GOD commends any thing in any of  
his Servants, it lays an Obligation on all the  
Rest, to imitat that thing, that thereby they  
also might please him.

That there is Frequent mention of *walk-  
ing with GOD* in the Scripture, is known  
to all and we design at present to unfold  
the Importance of the Phrase, and to shew the  
things comprehended therein, are neces-  
sary acts of GODS worship, and that who so  
would own and acknowledge him, ought to  
do it by these Instances.

The Septuagint, and Saint Paul follow-  
ing them, render the Phrase by *Pleasing  
GOD*: But in doing so, they rather have  
had an eye to the End of this Duty; then to  
explain the Particulars thereof. The scope  
and design of *Walking with GOD* is to please  
him, but by what Means we shall best do  
that; we will learn by considering the Rea-  
son of the Phrase and what is implied therein.



It is a *Metaphoricall speech* taken from the custom of *Mens conversing together*, especially of *Inferiours* keeping company with their *Superiours*: And it importeth these *several Particulars*, first, a dutifull regard of *GOD'S Presence*. Secondly a carefull observance of what he doth. *Thirdly*, the consulting him about what concerns us, especially the great and *Momentous Acts* of our Life: *Fourthly*, and and lastly, a stedfast and Faithful following, or keeping close those *Directions* and *Advices* which he gives. We shall take a view of each of these; and *First*,

*Of Regarding GOD'S Presence;*

First, *walking with GOD*, implies a *dutifull regard to his Presence*, that is out of respect to *GOD*, we ought to take care to carry our selves decently and suitably before him, for the *Presence* of great and *Worthy persons* doth alwayes oblige to a discreet and civill Behaviour. There be some indeed who are never over-awed by any, but speak, and do what ever comes in their head, and what ever their *Humors* prompts them to, what ever place or Company they be in; which bewrayes a great want of *Discretion*, and shews them to be insensible of what



what respect is due to those before whom they take this liberty. Certainly is is very great intolency, to act foolishly, or speak impertinently, before such whose either place, or wisdom, or vertue, doth command respect and reverence from us. When *Servants* are before their *Masters*, or *Children* before their *Parents*, or *Subjects* before their *Prince*, they ought to forebear not only what they know will certainly displease; but also all things light and undecent, as *Foolish jesting*, and *Filthy communication*, and the like: But how much more ought the Presence of *Almighty GOD* oblige us to compose our selves to a humble, Holy, and Vertuous behaviour? *GOD* gave it in Precept to *Abraham*, walk before Me, and be thou perfect; Gen. "17. 1. That is, consider thy self alwayes as in  
"my sight, and walke agreeably to the belief thereof,  
"by behaving thy self Perfectly and Uprightly". All the wayes of a Man are before the Lord, and he seeth all his goings, as it is Job 34: 21. None can hide themselves from him in secret places that he cannot see them, for every Creature is naked and open before Him: And therefore, what *Solomon* adviseth, when we come to the house of *GOD*, ought to be our care in every place, though never so secret and remote from the sight of Men, seing God is present every where

where as well as in his Temples; *keep thy foot, be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; Eccles. 5. 1.*

By this we do not mean, that Persons should every where and at every time, be taken up with Prayer and Meditation, and such other Religious Exercises, as are proper for the House of God, for God hath enjoyned other imployments besides these, and our present State and condition makes it necessary, often to mind other things. But what we would here inculcat, is that the sense of the Divine Presence, should make us take up Davids resolution, *I will take heed to my wayes, that I sin not with my tongue; Psal: 39. 1.* We ought to cut off from our Conversation whatsoever is evil and offensive to God, and to study as much as possible to demean our selves alwayes suitably, that is, as becomes our Station, the Time, Place, and other Circumstances requisite to be observ'd. Because Gods Eye is alwayes upon us, it should be our endeavour to do those things which he approves of, which doth not tye us to do always what is best in it self simply, or when compared to other things, but only that we never be busied in other then Lawfull and innocent things, and that we be ever careful to do what is best relatively, and agreeable

able to the Occasion, Time, Place and Witness of our Actions.

When we thus study to order our *conversation aright*, and to remove from it, what is evil, foolish, and undecent, in regard of God's presence which attends us, we do *highly honour* God, and it is as *acceptable Worship* as we can pay to Him : And without this, he will little regard our *sett and solemn services*. And indeed how can it be said, that they own or honour God, who are no wayes careful how they behave themselves before him? But they may be truly said to acknowledge him, who out of a *due deference to his presence* which fills both Heaven and Earth, do shun warrily what they think unworthy of it. Though there be some so out of measure, insolent and wicked, as not to care in whose presence they are; yet *generally* the *presence of men* have some influence upon us, and will restrain us from many things, which otherwayes we would, and are inclined to do, what gross *Atheism* then is it? And what a high contempt of God doth it speak out! To be over-awed by the eye of Man, and not by the presence of Almighty GOD! To do and forbear any thing, because Men are witnesses, and do approve or discommend it, and yet not to care to do or neglect the



same thing though God see us, What a dishonour is done to God, when we regard Man more then him? And do we not regard man more then God, when we are more desirous of applause from Men, then to find *favour in the Eyes of GOD*? And when we withdraw our selves from the eyes of Men lest they should know our evil Actions, but never value God's sight and knowledge thereof? He who doth thus, hath not taken *the Lord to be his God*, he doth not own and acknowledge him, he bows only to Men, to his own *Credit or Honour*, and hath set up these for his *GOD*. Wherefore who would not be guilty of such *gross Idolatry*, as to worship the *Creature* more then the *Creator*, and who would testifie and make it appear that they indeed adore the *true GOD*, let them not slight or despise the *Divine Presence*, but let them alwayes eye and consider it, and be carefull to carry themselves alwayes, as before so Great and Glorious a *Majesty*. And seeing that God is every where, and hath his eye alway upon us, let us in private and in publick, at home and abroad, at all time and in all places, walk wisely and circumspectly, let us not be guilty of such incivility towards God, as to do any unworthy thing before him: but let us labour so to behave



behave our selves, that he may think us worthy of that testimony, which he gave unto *Job*, whom he said, was a perfect and upright man, One that feared GOD, and eschewed evil; *Job* 1. and 1,

*Of Observing GOD'S Wayes and Actions.*

In the second place, *Walking with GOD*, implies a carefull observance of whatsoever be doth: For it is usuall for such as are in company together, to watch and take Notice of one anothers Words and Actions; and if one be more eminent for Wisdom and Vertue, or any other excellency, then such as are with him are the more oblidg'd to eyes his Motions and and Behaviour. Nothing which Excellent and *Worthy Persons* speake or doe, should fall to the Ground un-observ'd; and it doth speake out some contempt of one to think that what they do or say is not worth the noticing: as therefore out of respect to Great and *Eminent personages* we ought seriously to consider them, their Speeches & Actions; and to count them worthy our remembrance; so much more should our eyes be fixed upon God, and it is much more our dutie to consider him, what he hath done and what he dayly doth in the World; that



the consideration thereof, we may return *Him due praise and glory*. For this end GOD endued us with *Rational Spirits*, and with *understanding Faculties*, that we might be capable of Contemplating himself, and his workes. And therefore, when we turn away our eyes from such Contemplations, or neglect them, we do in so farr swerve from the *Design of our Creation*, and do disappoint GOD of that *Tribute of Praise* which is due unto him, yea, in steed of honouring him, we do actually dishonour him, by slighting the *Effects and Products* of his *infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness*. All *GOD'S Actings* are like himself and do shew forth his *Admirable Perfections*, there is no part, even of the *Material world*, but is stamped with some impression of his *Almighty power and unsearchable wisdom, and Infinite goodness*: And therefore what the *Psalmist* sayes of the *Heavens*, *Psal. 19. 1.* May be said of all *GOD'S other works*; they all declare the glory of GOD, i. e. As a *Curious engine or Fine Piece of Work*, doth hold out the *Skill and Cunning* of him that made it; so all the *Works of GOD* have in them, what doth set forth and proclaime, how wise, how great, and good he is. And as the *External and Material World*, doth contain

*Visible*

*Visible Characters* of the *Divine greatness and Perfections*, so *GOD* hath created *Rational and Intellectual Beings*, viz. *Angels and Men*, capable to discern and read them; that by so doing they may sound forth his Praise.

The *Contemplation and Admiration* of *God's works and Ways*, is our proper, and should be our constant employment: And if it had not been for this, there would not have been bestowed upon us *such Powers and Capacities*. Wise and *Understanding Persons*, will not *Expend* more upon any thing, then it is worth; they will not reare up *stately fabricks* meerly to lodge *Swine*, nor will they buy *fine Silk and Carpet to Wipe shoes and Dishes*: and neither would *GOD* have endued us with *understanding Souls, Immortal Spirits*, if we had been only destin'd to the *Acts of a Brutish and Sensuall life*; for then what *Judas* said imperinently, when the *Box of Oyntment* was powred upon our *LORD*, might have been here put as a very pertinent question, *What needed all this Cost*. For something less then *Reason and Spirit*, a meer *Animal Sagacity* might have served, and been sufficient for finding out and taking care of *Bodily Pleasures, and Accommodations*. *GOD* and his *Works* therefore, are the only suitable

table *object*, for our thoughts to be imployed about: these indeed are answerable to the capacities of our Soul; and as the considerations thereof, tendeth to the Honour of GOD, so it elevats our selves to a proper and becoming Dignity; whereas the most of other things are so far below us, and so much within our reach, that it is a *debasing of our Natures*, too much to mind, or to be taken up with them.

However, it is certain all the *Saints* and *Servants* of GOD have ever thought it their Duty, and a proper and necessary Testification of their Respect unto GOD, to be taken up with the *Contemplation of his Works*, both of *Creation and Providence*, and to set a part sometime dayly for this purpose. We are told that it was *Isaac's* custome, to go out to the Field and meditate about even-tide; Gen. 24: 63: and no doubt his Meditations were such as we are speaking of. The Book of *Job* shews how much that *holy Man* and his *Friends* were accustomed to the consideration of GOD'S *Works and Wayes*; for all their Discourse and Reasonings are taken thence. Yea, when GOD himself appeared unto *Job*, he calls him to a *particular consideration of his great and wonderful Works*, and does there-

therefore largely display them before him, in the 38. and following Chapters. Nay, what are all the *Psalms*, but as so many *devout Meditations of GOD'S Works*, or *Pious Hymns* composed in memory of them? *The Works of the LORD*, saith the *Psalmist*, are great, and they are sought out of all them, that have pleasure therein. *His Work is honourable and Glorious* and he hath ordained his wonderfull Works to be remembred; *Psal. III. 2. 3.* And again he saith, *All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy Saints shall blesse thee?* That is, as his works contain the matter of his Praise, so the *Saints* shall publish and Declare it, by admiring and magnifying of them, *they shall*, as he goeth on, *speake of the Glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power to make known to the Sons of Men his mighty Aets, and the Glorious Majesty of his Kingdom, Psal. 145. 10. &c.*

Thus it appears, that the observing of *GOD'S wayes and works*, makes a great part of his Worship; and that hereby we do truly acknowledge him to be what he is, not only of great Majesty, but also a *GOD of Infinite Wisdom and Power*: Because by so doing, we declare that *He does nothing in Vain*, nothing that is not infinitely *Worthy*, of our most *Serious Consideration*, and that  
our



our thoughts can never be better employed, them in the Contemplation of what he hath done and dayly doth in the World. Let us therefore frequently betake our selves, to the Contemplation of GOD'S *Works* both of *Nature* and *Providence*; Let us sit down and seriously and devoutly consider them, and Admire, and Adore that Wisdom, Power and Goodnesse which appears in them.

It will become us to take notice, *how manifold the works of the LORD are*, and *in what Wisdom he hath made them all*: How he hath reared up this vast fabrick of the World out of nothing, and Wonderfully beautified & adorned it. *How he hath stretcht out the Heavens like a curtain, and in them hath set a Tabernacle for the Sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoyceth as a strong man to run a race, whose going forth is from the end of the Heaven and his circuit to the ends of it, and there is nothing, hid from the heat thereof.* What a wise and admirable contrivance is the *Scituation* and *Motion* of the *Sun*, whereby all the parts of the world are equally enlightned? For what any part wants at one time, it hath at another, those places which are longest without the *Sun*, have him also longest with them, so that *his Presence* alwayes equals his *Absence*.  
And



And the dispensing *his presence* thus differently is much more usefull and convenient, then if it had been otherwise; it is visibly better that the *Sun* moves now betwixt the *two Tropicks* not in a straight or direct Line, then if it had rolled regularly upon the *Equator*: for then those *under the Line* or near it would have had all the Advantage, and his influence upon the rest of the World would have been very faint, like to that in *March* and *September*, which is not sufficient to produce and ripen the *various fruits* of the Earth, which are usefull both for our Support and Pleasure. But when we have our eyes lifted up to the Heavens, the *Sun* is not all which is worthy to be observed here, we ought likewise to consider the *Moon* which *GOD* hath appointed for the *Distinguishing Seasons*, and hath placed as a Lamp to give light in the night, that those whose necessities call to travell then, may be directed and see their way. We ought to view the *Stars* also, these admirable *Embellishments* of the *Heavenly Frame*, which we have reason to think vastly bigger, beyond their appearance, else how would they be seen at such a distance? And seeing *Reason* catcheth them to be so great in quantity, and that our eyes shew them to be many in

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number

number, and Art yet farr more, we may well conclude that the work of GODS Creation is great & magnificent above the reach of our Apprehensions: And therefore it may fill us with wonder and astonishment, that GOD should take such notice of *Man*, who bears so small a proportion to the rest of the Creation; *When I consider the Heavens, saith David, the work of thy Fingers, the Moon, and the Stars, which thou hast ordained; Lord, what is man, that thou art mindfull of him? Or the Son of Man that thou visitest him? Psalm 8. 3. 4.*

The Earth is to the rest of the World as a point to a great glob, or a grain of sand to a high mountain, and yet it affords many instances both of the Wisdom and Power of GOD. *It hangs upon nothing, as Job speaks; and yet as the Psalmist hath observed, he hath so laid the Foundations thereof, that it cannot be removed for ever; the Earth is ordained a Temporary abode for Man, and it is made most usefull and convenient; for it affords not only Necessaries but Comforts; it yelds not only Food to sustain our Life, but also pleasure to affect our senses; there are proper objects to every appetite, and things suitable to all the ends and purposes of our Present Condition. Every place gives the necessaries of Life*

Life, and what is else desireable is wisely  
 sorted, so that they who live in the seve-  
 rall parts of the world may be engaged to  
 entertain *mutual Commerce* together. Though  
 the State of things be not now as'twas at  
 the beginning, (becaule sin hath altered the  
 order and beauty of them, by reason there-  
 of every creature groaneth and travelleth with  
 pain) yet we may easily discern that GOD  
 designed us all content and satisfaction even  
 here below: For with what variety of de-  
 lights hath he replenished this world: What  
 a multitude of living Creatures of diverse  
 kinds, hath he put therein for our use and  
 service? And how wisely are they all dis-  
 posed? The Cattel go upon the mountains  
 the wild beasts lodge in Forests, Fowls nest  
 in Trees, the high hills are a refuge for Goats, and  
 the rocks for the Coney. And though our sins  
 do provock GOD to turn the earth into a  
 barren Wilderness, yet he still visits and wa-  
 tereth it, and greatly enricheth it, he Watereth  
 the ridges thereof abundantly, and setteth the fur-  
 rows thereof, he maketh it soft with showers, & bles-  
 seth the springing thereof: He crowns the Year  
 with his Goodness, and his paths drop Fatness;  
 they Drop upon the Pastures of the Wilderness,  
 and the little hills rejoyce on every side, the Pastures  
 are cloathed with flocks, and the valleys also are co-

vered with Corn. He causeth grasse to grow for the Cattel, and Herb for the service of Man: that he may bring forth food out of the Earth, and Wine that maketh glad the heart of Man, and Oyl to make his face to shine, and bread which strengthneth Mans heart. The earth is full of the Riches of the LORD; so is the great and wide Sea. wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great Beasts, who herd together in Companies, as well as those upon the Land, at their appointed Moneths and Seasons, they ascend from the bottom of the Deep and walk upon the Surface of the Waters, that they may be catcht by the Children of Men to serve for Food and other necessaries. There goe the Ships: there is that Leviathan, whom GOD hath made to play therein. By his peeplings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eye lids of the Morning; out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out; out of his nostrils go smoke as out of a seething Pot or Cauldron. He maketh the deep to boyle like a Pot, and the Sea to be as a Pot of Oyntment, he maketh a path to shine after him, so that one would think the Deep to be hoary. Upon the Earth there is not his like, so that one may be cast down at the very sight of him; as it is Job 41. 9. Where also he is largely described. The frame, the sagacity, the ends and uses of the several sorts of living  
Creatures



Creatures are wonderfull, and their dependance on GOD no lesse: for they are all madeto waite upon GOD, that he may give them their meat in due season, what he giveth they gather, he openeth his hand and they are filled with good. He hides his face and they are troubled; he takes away their breath, and then they die and return to their dust. Again, he sendeth forth his Spirit, and they are Created; thus he still reneweth the face of the Earth.

These Various and Wonderfull Works of Nature, which we have dayly and every where before our Eyes, we ought not to slight; but should duely and seriously consider them, that we may have more abundant matter for praising him, whose greatnesse they shew forth. We mistake it very much, if we think the Consideration of these things, should be reserved and put over to *Natural Philosophers*; nay, they are proper for the meditation of every *Christian*. Neither is it necessary to be train'd up at *Schools*, to become qualified for such contemplations: for the most Ignorant Person, and he or she that is least Book-learn'd, if they but seriously set themselves to it, may be able well enough to discover and find out the greatness and Wisdom and Usefulness of *God's Works* and if they doe this, it is all which is requisite:  
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The wisest *Philosophers* can aim no farther, and when they do not aime at this, their *Speculations* turn vain, empty and insipid things.

But of all *Gods Works*, none ought more to be considered, then those of *His Providence*, *His Aÿings*, and *Dealings* with the Children of Men: How the LORD looketh from Heaven and beholdeth all the Sons of Men; from the place of his Habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the Earth, he fashioneth their Hearts alike, and considereth all their Works. And though there be many devices in Mens Hearts, yet he suffereth his own Counsell only to stand; for he bringeth the Counsell of the wicked to nought, and maketh the devices of the People of none effect. 'Tis well worth the while to take notice, how miraculously he sometimes preserves Kings and Kingdoms from Destruction, when it is much threatened them by Enemies; and how again at other times he causeth them to be minished and brought low, maugre all the humane endeavours to the contrary. How he powreth contempt upon Princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way, that they may know themselves to be but Men; and that the most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whom he will. And how on the other hand to let the People see that  
there

There is no power but of GOD, he curbs their rage, stills their Tumuls, defeats their Conspiracies and Rebellious Designs, and forceth them to stand in awe of the Authority established over them, which otherwise is too weak to restrain their fury. *he Lord maketh Poor, and maketh Rich, he bringeth low and lifted up, he raiseth up the Poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the Beggar from the Dunghill, to set them among Princes, and to make them inherit the Throne of Glory.* It's fit to observe, how variously and wonderfully, God punisheth Sin, and rewardeth Vertue and Righteousness; for his Hand findeth out infull Men, and maketh them to smart for all their evil Deeds, and repayeth them as they have dealt with others, that with *A. donibezek*, they may say, *as I have done, so GOD requited me.* But he blesteth the Righteous and giveth them Peace; he sendeth them many Afflictions to teach them Wisdom, and to perfect them in Virtue, but also *he delivereth them out of them all*, that Men may learn to trust the LORD, and to seek his Favour above all Things. Thus we ought to consider the various instances of Gods Providence towards the Children of Men, what Straits, Difficulties, and Dangers they fall into, and how strangely they escape them  
and

and how wonderfully their Peace and Comfort, their Honour and Happiness are brought about by wayes unseen, and by methods unthought of either by themselves or others. *Whoso is wise, saith the Psalmist, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving Kindness of the Lord; Psal. 107. 43.* And certainly such as are truly wise either to GOD, or for themselves will not fail to observe GODS working in the World, especially his manifold Providences, and Wonderful works towards the Children of Men, whereby they shall both encrease in Wisdom, even the chiefest Wildom, and shall also understand, and be made sensible of GODS gracious Love and Favour: Which shall yet farther appear to their Comfort, if they take exact notice of the Divine Providence towards themselves, *how wonderfully they were made! How carefully preserved! how much they are followed with his goodness! And what wise contrivances are made for their good, which they little know of, or think upon! Every one of us may discover these things, in the course of our Life:* And as this discovery will manifest the Divine favour, so t'will ravish our Souls with delight, there being nothing more delightfull and pleasant, then  
to

to find out that we are *Beloved of GOD*. Wherefore as it is a piece of slight put upon GOD, not to observe these his *Admirable workings*, and *Manifestations of his Power, Wisdom and Goodness*; So it is a prejudice unto our selves; in that hereby we are deprived of unspeakable Pleasures and Delight, which otherwise would accrue unto us. And is it not strange that this so pleasant Duty, should be so much neglected and laid aside; the nearer sort drudge alwayes at their Work, and take no leasure to meditate; and those who can, and do allow themselves some spare hours, do for the most part imploy them in hearing and telling News, in Curious enquiries about the Motions & Transactions, of some remote Prince, which little concerns them, and which amounts to little when known, they becoming thereby neither wiser nor more Happy. Nay it is to be feared, that even those we call studious Persons, make these *Divine Contemplations* the least part of their Study: but bestow more pains to know the Journeys of *Cesar*, or *Alexander*, the opinions of *Ancient & Modern Authours*, and the like. I do not say, we should be altogether taken up with the consideration of Gods *Wayes and Works*; but certainly nothing concerns us more; nor



is there any thing more worthy of us, this is most worthy of Angels. What a foolish thing then is it to mind Trivial and Inconsiderable things, and to slight what is of greatest moment? To be much busied about what we have nothing to do with, and in the Mean time to neglect and be careless of what is both our *Interest and Duty*? what respect to the *Divine Majesty* oblidgeth us to, and by doing of which we may procure to our selves much Joy and Satisfaction.

Now as it is our Duty thus to observe the *Works and wayes of GOD*; so that we may be enabled to make a wiser Observation of them, 'twill be necessary to follow the Light and Direction of the *holy Scripture*: By which means we shall both see the more clearly, and shall also understand the ends and uses of *GODS works* more fully. Many things which lye hid from the *light of Nature* may be discerned by the *Word of GOD*, this gives us a better view of many of *GODS* *Actions*, then what is possible to have otherwise. And hereby only we are instructed in *one Work of GOD*, which of all others is the greatest and most wonderfull we can see the *Work of Mans Redemption*; This is the *deepest Mystery*, and of the greatest importance both



both for it self, & because helps to unriddle  
all the other Mysteries of Divine Providence.  
Such as are ignorant may with the Greeks  
count it Foolishness, who seriously exa-  
mine it, shall find the Power of GOD, and  
Wisdom of GOD; Therefore it is said, the  
Angels desire to look upon it. 1. Pet. 1. 12. And  
seeing it concerneth more then them, cer-  
tainly we can never sufficiently either Con-  
sider it or Admire it. It be our Duty to  
observe the Divine Productions, as we have  
made it appear, such we ought to Contem-  
plate this which is the chief Contrivance of  
his Wisdom, and the very end of all the  
other purposes of his Eternal Counsel. In  
the Mystery of the Cross we are bid all the Treas-  
ures of Wisdom and Knowledge, as St. Paul  
speaks, Col 2. 3. We see the most  
amazing things, viz. the union betwixt two  
Natures, infinitely distant, a Reconciliation be-  
twixt infinite Justice; and infinite Mercy, the  
greatest severity towards Sinners, and the great-  
est kindness towards Sinners, expressed by  
one and the same Act. All Gods works declare  
his Glory, but never any more or so much  
as this; his Power, Wisdom, Goodness,  
Holiness, Justice, Mercy, and other Per-  
fections were never so gloriously Display-  
ed as here. On this therefore we must in a

more speciall manner fix our Thoughts and that not meerly to satisfy our Curiosity, or to stuffe our Heads with Notions: but to fill us with a greater Knowledge of GOD, to raise our Admiration of him, to excite our Love to him, and to stirre up our Souls and all their Powers and Faculties, *to Bless and Praise Him for his Goodness and Wonderful Works to the Children of Men.* And as this should be our End, in Observing and Contemplating the *Wayes and Works of God*; so upon this very account we are oblidge thereto, because that this is the proper and necessary mean to carry on this End, we cannot Love, nor Admire, nor Adore nor Trust, &c: What we do not know, and we cannot know GOD otherwayes then by his Works, and those Manifestations which he hath given of himself, for there can be no *Immeditat intuition* of his essence, and the *Idea* which we have of him by nature will soon be defaced, if it be not cherished by such *Meditations*. That therefore we may know GOD, and knowing him be engaged to those Acts of Love, Praise, Trust, Dependance, &c. Which is due to him, we ought to observe those Works and Actions of GOD which he hath laid before us, in Nature; and in his Word, and which daylie

daylie appear by the *Administration of his Providence* towards our selves and others.

Wherefore also we must not do this only now and then, or in a slight overly manner: But we ought to be taken up frequently with such *Contemplations*, and when we set about them it should be with all Seriousness and Attention, that we may understand what we Consider, and that it may have a due Impression on us; short and Superficial glances do little good. Indeed what occurs to us, as we Converse with others, or go up and down about our Affairs, we need not stay long thereon, but may observe passingly: But 'twill be necessary besides, to set a part some particular time for this purpose, that our *Meditations* may be more Deliberate, and free of Distractions. How much time should be allotted, and what hours are best must be left to each ones Prudence and Discretion; for there can be no general rules, prescrib'd to all: some have their time at their own Disposal, and can use it as they please, others are not so. The *First sort* may keep hours, and are oblig'd to spend more time in this Exercise; but for the Last, they must take the Evening, or the Morning, or Midday, as is most convenient for them, and must continue

tinue long or short as agrees best with their Station and Imployment. Every one hath the *Lords day* almost free, and therefore it is every ones Duty to imploy this Day thus, which is indeed the *Main end of the Day*; and they who cannot command much time all the Week, are above all others obliged to use this Day well to the present purpose. As to the Order and Method of *Meditating*, it is not very Material, neither need any be nicely Curious, in what Order, or after what Way and Manner they proceed in *considering these Works of God*, Providing they seek them out seriously, labour to understand them truely, and make proper and usefull Reflections on them. At every Retirement, we cannot make serious and deep Observations of all *Gods Works*, therefore to consider them well, 'twill be requisite to consider them severally. Sometimes our *inward Disposition*, *Externall state*, *the present occasion*, and *other Circumstances* make some of Gods Works more proper and suitable then others, when it is so, we should determine our *Meditations* to these especially: But ordinarily when there is no such particular Reason to determine us, 'twill be best & most profitable to follow the course & order of the *Scripture*, for we may call the  
*Scripture*



Scripture, *Divine Memoires*, which hold forth to us the great and admirable Actions of the *Universall Monarch* of the *World*. And thus much of the *Second instance of Walking with God*.

### *Of Consulting GOD.*

The *third particular* meant by *walking with GOD*, is the consulting Him about what concerns us. For as is usuall for such as are in Company together, to Advise with one another; so by walking with God we are to understand, the asking his Counsel and Direction, and the Guidance of his unerring wisdom. The more eminent any one is, the more others are oblig'd to advise with him, especially if with all he hath a Jurisdiction & Authority over them, and that there be Obligations on them to study the pleasing him. Thus Servants and Children ought to consult their Parents and Masters, not only because they should think them more wise then themselves: but also because it is their Duty to Humour and Please them, and so it being our Duty to *walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing*; as it is *Col. 1. 10*. Therefore we should do nothing without his Warrant and Advice. *The way of Man is not*



*in himself, as the Prophet hath it, it is not in him that walketh to direct his Steps, Jer. 10. 23.* We are for the most part Foolish and Ignorant, and do not know what is the best and and safest Course to steer, and which is worse we are oftentimes carried away by diverse Lusts; and these Lusts do blind our Judgements, and hinder us from discerning the Truth, and therefore it is great presumption in us to follow the *devices and suggestions of our own hearts*, unless we find them *allowed and approved of by God*: Unless he Guide and instruct us, we may, nay shall certainly erre, and our Designs shall miscarry. Our Peace and Comfort here, and *Happinesse hereafter*, are not the effects of Chance; but the Fruits of God's *Favour and Love*, which is not procured by walking at random, or doing any thing inconsiderately, never taking heed whether it be fit or not: We only then please God, and gain His *Favour*, when we wisely consider our doings, and do seriously deliberat about all we have to do especially what is of greater moment and concernment, that all may be agreeable to the Minde and Will of GOD. As Solomon therefore adviseth, *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding; In all thy wayes acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths; Prov. 3. 5, 6.* There

There *being* now no *Prophet* to enquire at, nor any *Empowred* (as the *High Priest* of old) to deliver *Oracles* and give *Responses*; it will be asked what we mean by consulting *GOD*? wherefore to clear this Matter and to prevent all Mistakes thereanent, and to guard against all Abuses to which some may be ready to wrest it, I shall shew two things.  
1<sup>st</sup>. Whereabout we should consult God.  
2<sup>ly</sup>. What way and manner it is to be done.

As to the first, by *consulting GOD*, is not meand the betaking our selves to him, to know the Event of any Business we are engag'd in, or whither if we do this or the other thing 'twill succeed and prosper; we may indeed, nay ought to recommend all our Lawfull and Virtuous Undertakings to God, that he may blesse them with successe and we may lawfully wish Successe thereto, but ever with a Humble Submission to the will of God, according as our Saviour hath taught us to say, *not my will, but thine be done*: but to be desirous to know before hand, what God purposeth to do, is not allowed us. *It is not for you, saith Christ, to know the times and Seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power; Acts 1. 7.* and as not the times and Seasons, so neither the things themselves which he hath determined to bring to pass.

These *Secrets* of the *Divine Counsel*, God hath reserv'd to himself, and 'twould but offend him to be over curious to know them. It is not the will of God that we seek for this, for he hath given us no Means to come to the knowledge thereof; for to have recourse to *Astrologers*, *Wizards*, such as have *Familiar Spirits*, &c. Are means as Unlawfull as they are Uncertain and Deceitful. Nor is it profitable for us to know what shall befall us, God keeps this Secret, because it is better to be Ignorant of it, then if it were revealed: 'tis better that we *live by Faith then such a sight*, because hereby these necessary vertues of Patience, trust in God, Watchfulness, and Diligence, are exercised & confined. It is true the *Jews* of old had Liberty granted them to enquire about future Events and their Desires were satisfied as appears by many Instances in *Scripture*: but now the Reason of such Extraordinary *Temporal priviledges* is ceased, and the *Gospel* requires us to be *entirely resign'd to GOD*, and to be dispos'd either to Prosperity or Adversity, to Disappointments and Successes, with a kind of indifferency, because the *Glory of GOD and our true Felicity*, depend neither upon the one nor the other, but may be Advanced by either of them.

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To consult GOD then, is not to enquire into *secret purposes of his Counsel how he intends to dispose of us*: but it is that we may be informed of our Duty, that we may understand what becomes us to do in the *several Periods of our life*, and in all those Stations and relations we stand in: what course of Life we should intend; How we ought to carry ourselves having chosen one? How we should best spend our Time and Order our Affairs, that as much as possible, we may be without *all offence either to GOD or Man*.

From hence it follows that we ought never to deliberate about things certainly unlawful, nor yet ask of GOD whither at any time we may venture upon them, for this in plain terms is, to ask whither we should thwart his Will, transgress his Laws, grieve his Spirit, dishonour his Name, and rebell against his Authority. They therefore tempt God, and Act most impudently who ask Counsel in such a Case; and what prompts Men to things sinfull is not the Spirit of GOD: the Counsel is not from GOD which Allows and Approves of any *unlawfull deed*. GOD is not the Author of Sin, *He cannot be tempted with evill, neither tempteth he any man*; *Jam. 1. 13*. It is a delusion of Satan which draws Persons to wickedness, or

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which make them continue the practice of any wicked Action whatever such pretend, and whatever high conceit they may entertain of themselves, yet the Scripture tells us, *that it is a heavy Judgement and a sign of a reprobate mind to be given up to do things unlawfull, and which are not convenient; Rom: 1. 28.*

When therefore we come to *Consult GOD*, as we ought alwayes in all doubtful Cases, it should be to know what is lawfull, and not only what is simply lawfull, but also what is expedient, what is futable for us as we are so Stated & Circumstantiated, and by what wayes and Means we should prosecute those Ends we ought to have before us. *viz. GOD'S Glory, our Neighbours good, and our own present Comfort, and after happiness.*

Now having seen whereabouts we ought to *consult GOD*, we come in the next place to shew *how we are to doe it.* And First, we must lay aside all *prejudice and byassed affections* and put on the *Indifferency of a Traveller* who hath no Inclination to turn either to the Right or the Left hand, but to be directed in the *Right way.* If we do not this, we are not *Sincere* when we seek *Counsel of God*, nor capable to receive it though it be given; this was the fault of the *Young Man* that came to  
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our Saviour, to ask, *what he should do to inherite eternal Life?* For because the Answer would have parted him and his Possessions, he would not listen to it. If Men be blinded with Prejudice, they will not see the Light though it be clear; nor will they be perswaded though they have *Sufficient convictions laid before them*, if their Inclinations be strong another way, we must therefore free our selves of all Passion and Prejudice; and be Sincerely Desirous of *right Information*. In the next place, we must *Adresse our selves to GOD* by *Humble and Hearty Prayer*, that it may please him to Enlighten the eyes of our Minds, to the discerning His Will, and the way wherein we should walk: For if we do not Pray, we are not desirous hereof, neither duely Value it, and so GOD will not think us worthy of it; who *Despise or Lightly esteem the Counsel and Direction of the LORD*, shall be left to wander in the Ignorance and Darknesse of their own Minds: But he will lead and guide them in the Paths of Righteousnesse, who humbly seek Him. But though Prayer be good, yet it is not the only Means, it must not be neglected, but it must not be rested in. We must not ask direction, - as *Pilate, what was Truth at Christ*, who when he put the questi-

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on, presently went out and stayed not for an Answer. After we have Prayed, we should listen attentively to what GOD layeth; we ought to hearken carefully to the *voice of GOD*. And therefore, *Thirdly*, we must search *Diligently the Scriptures*, for they are the *Word of God*, and in and by them he speaketh to us his Will and Pleasure. God hath given the *Scripture*, to be a *Lamp unto our feet and a Light unto our Path*; And so who would walk uprightly so as to Please God, must follow the Guidance thereof. 'Tis true God speaketh also *Inwardly* by his *Spirit* to the Hearts and Minds of Men, but Ordinarily it is by the *outward Means of the Word*. 'Tis seldom and in some singular Cases only, that he speaks to men without the *Mediation of the Scriptures*: However he never speaketh but agreeably to the *Scriptures*, whatever he sayeth any manner of way must be consistent with the *Doctrine and Precepts of the Scriptures*, for GOD neither can nor will contradict Himself. Wherefore all *inward Suggestions and Inspirations* must be examined by the *Written word of GOD*, which as St. Peter speaks in a like case, is the *surest Word*, 2 Pet 1. 19. We have Reason to put greater Confidence in the *outward Light of the Scriptures*, then what is *inwardly suggested*

ed; for we may readily deceive our selves here, and take the *delusions of Satan*, or our own strong Imaginations for the *Inspirations of GOD'S Spirit*, every one cannot distinguish betwixt them, and indeed it is often hard for any to do it, but by comparing them to what is delivered in the *Scripture*, which we are sure is from GOD. We must not then be too hasty in concluding our inclination to a thing, or aversion from it, (after that we have prayed fervently) to be from GOD unlesse it be warranted by the *Word of GOD* revealed in the *Scripture*, or at least no wise opposite to what is there enjoyn'd us.

The *Scriptures* are the *holy Oracles* which deliver the *mind of GOD*, to them therefore we must resort at all times, and on all Occasions to know what we should do; and by them all Persons of each Sexe, Age, Condition, Imployment may be instructed how to order their *conversation aright before GOD*. For they are so composed, that the *Man of GOD*, by them may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works; 2 Tim. 3. 17. 'Tis true every one will not find their particular Case Stated and Resolved, but either Directly or Indirectly, either by expresse Precepts or Paralel, and not much different Examples

amples, they shall see what may sufficiently inform and resolve them: And whoso will give themselves entirely up to the conduct of GOD in his word shall without doubt (as we shewed before) either  
*See part first chap; 2?* by secret Suggestions of the Spirit, or by some speciall occurrences of his providence be Particularly directed in the disposall of themselves and their affairs which are of greatest concernment and to which it cannot be expected that the Scripture should speak particularly. The meek will be guide in judgement, and the meek will he teach his way. All the paths of the LORD are Mercy and Truth, unto such as keep his Covenant and Testimonies; Psal. 25. 9. 10.

Thus we have shewed how we should consult GOD, and by what means wee may come to be directed by him. Now certainly it concerns us very much thus to consult Him, and to follow these Means for acquainting our selves with what is proper for us to do. The Heathens of old gloried much in their Oracles, and used to Consult them in all their affairs, though they were so uncertain and Ambiguous, that they proved more often Snares to entrap them, then Lights to guide them. But sure wee have much more Reason to Glory and Rejoyce in

in this *Special Priviledge* we have of *Consulting the true GOD*, who neither will deceive others, nor can be deceived himself; and who hath been Graciously pleased to speak to us so plainly and clearly by *his Word*, and who Promises farther Direction as we stand in need. Hereby we are enabled to walk wisely, and are shewed the *True way* of carrying on our *Happiness, and Peace, the Testimony of the Lord*, saith David, is sure, making wise the simple; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightning the eyes. Psal. 19. 7, 8. It was a laudable custome amongst the *Jews*, to ask *Counsel of GOD* before they began any Enterprize; and so it becomes us to resort unto the *Scriptures for Counsel and Direction*, where we shall receive it fully and clearly if we be desirous thereof, and follow the Direction prescribed above. David no doubt had many Counsellours, and yet he preferred the *Word and Law of GOD* before them all: *thy testimonies*, saith he, *are my delight and Counsellours*. And again, he tells, us that he had more understanding then all his Teachers, for *GODS Testimonies were his Meditation*; Ps. 119. 24. 99. It is reported of the *Heathen Socrates* that he pretended to have a certain Spirit or genius, which he used as his Counsellour; and therefore when ever he was required to

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speak



speak or to do any thing. his usuall answer  
 was, *si ~~Dominus~~ permiserit*, <sup>*Ratio*</sup> *if my spirit or genius*  
*will suffer.* Now it is our Happiness that we  
 have a better Counsellour to advise with, and  
 therefore also whenso e're any thing is pro-  
 pounded unto us, either to our understand-  
 ings or Wills, to be believed or practised, let  
 our Answer be with the Psalmist, *I will hear*  
*what GOD the LORD will speak* Ps. 85. 8. I will  
 first consult GOD, by the *Holy Oracles* of  
 the *Scriptures*. And if we never conclude or  
 resolve any thing without *advising thus with*  
*GOD*, we shall highly honour him and shew  
 an entire regard unto him, and also take a  
 Wise and most Profitable Course for our  
 selves. But alas! As Solomon complains,  
*wherefore is there a price in the hand of a Fool to*  
*get Wisdom, seeing he hath no heart unto it?* So  
 it may be said; *to what purpose is it?* And  
 how little doth it avail us, to have the *Scriptures*,  
 seeing we make so little use of them, and  
 take so little notice of what GOD says to us  
 in and by them? How sad is it, and what  
 matter of regrave to see how many miscarry  
 in this Point? There be many who will  
 readily consult Flesh and Blood, they will  
 listen to the *corrupt maxims* of the World,  
 they will hearken to what the Devil himself  
 doth say, and suggest unto them; but only  
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what GOD the LORD speaketh, they care not to hear: nay with the *deaf Adder*, they stop their ears and will not hearken to the voice of the *Charmer*, though he Charm never so wisely. And as Men hereby slight and dishonour GOD, in that they undervalue his *Counsel*, so they intangle themselves in a World of Trouble and Difficultys: for many, nay most of our Crosses and Sorrows, are but the effects of this folly. For when we do not *ask Counsel of the LORD*, but will needs take our own courses, then he *blasts our designs*, by leaving us to our selves, to stand by our own strength; and so it comes to passe, that we have no ability to conquere the difficultys we are engag'd in, but must necessarily sink under them, whereas if we consulted GOD, he would not fail to concur with *his Power and Providence* to effectuat that which he himself had advised or approved of. That therefore we may be Wise in all our Undertakings, and have Comfort in them, let us undertake nothing without GOD, let us be carefull alwayes to ask Direction of him, praying with *David*, *shew me thy wayes O LORD, teach me thy paths, lead me in thy truth and teach me: for thou art the GOD of my Salvation, on thee do I wait all the day.* Ps. 25. 4. And then no doubt GOD

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would

would guide us with his Counsel here, and receive us into Glory hereafter : If withall in the last place , we Stedfastly and Faithfully observe the wayes he layeth before us, and keep close to the Direction he gives, which we told was the last Particular included in *Walking with GOD*, and which comes next to be spoken to,

*Of Following GOD.*

We must not *Consult* GOD out of *curiosity* to know his Mind and Judgement, but out of a *Sincere desire* and *Purpose* to do his Will and Pleasure. As we must first Advise with him what should be done, so having understood his Mind , we should next with Care and Diligence set about the doing of it. We have Reason sometimes to dispute the Reasonableness and Equity of Mens Counsels and Advices , but we must never call in Question the Justice or Fittesse of what GOD *proposeth unto us*, but ought cordially and freely to close with it. Obedience must be *the fruit of our hearing*, or else we Hear to no purpose; and therefore *Hearing and Obeying* in the *Scriptures*, are often taken for one and the same thing : to *hear GOD* is to obey him , and to *consult with him* , is to do his will.

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True hearing, is *opus animi, non auris*, it is a work of the Mind rather than the Eare: But though it reside in the Mind, yet it must spread through our Affections and Actions, otherwise it is vain and unacceptable.

As he is said to walk with one, who followeth him and taketh the same way he goeth, so to walk with GOD, is to follow the wayes of GOD, and to tread *the whole paths of his commandments*: For the end of our walking with him must be to please him, as the *Septuagint* still rendreth the Phrase; now we cannot please him, if we frequently turn aside, and go out of the way which he commands us. As a true Friend we must never leave him or part with him, but must follow chearfully whither so ever he leads us, be the way fair or foul, pleasant or unpleasant. They cannot be said to walk together who only have some accidental Rencounters: nor can he be said to *Walk with GOD*, who only complies with him now and then, or in some particulars which suites with his Humour or proves for his Interest. They only are said to walk truly together, who hold on the same Way, keep still the same Pace, carry on the same Design, run the same dangers, and who share together in every thing: even so he only *Walks with GOD*, who

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*Devots himself entirely to God, whose thoughts and Purposes, Motions, and Actings are all GOD'S, that is, such as he requires and which tend to his Glory; Who doth not sometimes step aside to seek his own Ease, Pleasure or Profite, nor yet taketh wayes which GOD doth not allow of, but he minds wholly the things of God, and follows altogether the courses he approves of, even though thereby he expose himself to Danger and Trouble. In Walking with GOD, there must be such an Union as is betwixt a Wife and her Husband, whereby his Interest becomes hers, which makes it her Delight and Care to Please him, and which engageth her to abide with him, what ever be his Lot and Condition. It was a noble and generous Friendship, which Ittai shewed to David, when he fled from Absolom, As the Lord liveth, said he, and as my LORD the King liveth, surely in what place my Lord the King shall be whither in death or Life, even there also will thy servant be. 2 Sam. 15. 21. Ruth expressed the like towards her Mother in Law, when she said, Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge, and the Lord do so to me and more also, if ought but death part thee and me; now if we would walk uprightly*



*uprightly with GOD*, we must walk after the same manner: for as none but Friends use to walk together, so by *Walking with GOD*, is meant such a High and Intimate and Constant Friendship, which sticks not at Difficulties, nor startles at Dangers, but which makes a Man cheartfully set about whatever the Interest or Pleasure of his Friend calls for: An Eminent Instance hereof, we have in *Abraham*, who therefore is called *the friend of GOD*; where ever GOD called him, he Cheartfully followed; whatever he Enjoined, he readily Obeyed; he stumbled not at Difficulties or Dangers, or any Inconveniences, but yielded an entire obedience to the Will of GOD when ever it was intimate to him.

And as this is to *walk with GOD*, so by walking thus with Him we make the most proper acknowledgement of him and pay the most acceptable Worship to him: for hereby we declare a true sense of his Wisdom, Goodnesse, Greatnesse, and Absolute Sovereignty; and that we think him worthy of all Honour, Love, and Service. GOD is not truly honoured, when we make not an Oblation of the best things to him; for he who is *Authour of all* should be *served with the best*, or else he is badly requited: And  
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consequently he is never truly Honoured or Worshipped but when we make an oblation of our whole selves to him. I beseech you therefore Brethren, saith St. Paul, by the mercies of GOD, that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to GOD, which is your reasonable service, and be not conformed to this World, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of GOD. Rom 12.

1, 2. Now what is it to make a Sacrifice of our selves: but only to Walk with GOD, for who Walketh with GOD as we have shewed, Sacrifices his understanding to God to Believe what he reveales, and to Contemplate what he does; he Sacrificeth his will to be entirely regulate by his Laws, his Affections to be placed or displaced according to his Order; and in a word, his whole Life and all its Operations to set forward the purposes of his Counsel and the Glory of his Name; Which indeed is a most Reasonable Service, for what lesse can be payed to him who is the Author and preserver of our Being, and gives us whatever we enjoy? It is also agreeable to his Word, nay the very thing it calls for (which perhaps is true meaning of the Apostles λογικη λατρεία) for the very scope of the Scripture is to teach us this and to oblige us

us thereto. Finally it is most acceptable. **GOD** is very well pleased with these *Spiritual Sacrifices*, they have an *Odour of sweet Smell with him*: But if they be wanting that thing which is savoury; if we do not *walk closely and constantly with God* as above, though we would bring never so many *Burnt Offerings* and *Calves* of a Year old, *Thousand* of *Rams*, and *ten thousand Rivers* of *Oyl*, yet He would not regard them. *Sacrifice and Offering thou didst not desire*, *Burnt Offering and Sin Offering thou hast not required*; then said I, Lo I come, in the *Volume of the Book* it is written of Me, I delight to do thy will, O my **GOD**, yea they *Law* is within my Heart. *Psal. 40. 6. 7.* Let none think, saith *Lactantius*, that **GOD** requires *Victims*, *Incense*, *Divine Donations*, &c. For if he be not capable of *Hunger*, *Thirst*, *Cold*, neither hath the *Desire* of *Earthly things*, he will not use these and the like which are brought unto the *Temples*: but as *Corporeal Beings* require things of the like Nature, so a *Spiritual Sacrifice* is only necessary to be offered to a *Spiritual Being*. What **GOD** hath given to *Man* for his use he himself needs not; and besides the whole *World* is his, and the fulness thereof: he needs not a *Temple*, who hath the *World* for his dwelling place nor an *Image*, or *Statue* who is

incomprehensible ; he stands not in need of Lamps and Earthly Lights , who hath kindled the Sun and the rest of the Stars for Mans behoof ; what is it therefore , saith he , which GOD requireth of Man , but the inward Worship of the mind seeing He himself is pure and Holy , for these things which are wrought by the Hands , and which are without the Man , is no true or proper Sacrifice ; neither that which is taken out of the Coffer , but which cometh from the Heart ; nor what is offered by the Hand , but by the Soul. This is a true Sacrifice , when the Soul offereth it self unto GOD : For what signifieth other Sacrifices ? What doth incense , what do Garments , and Gold , and Silver and Precious stones profit , if the Worshippers mind be not holy and pure ? 'Tis only Righteousness which GOD seeks after , 'Tis in this that the True Worship of GOD doth consist. The true Worshippers of GOD , saith CHRIST , shall Worship him in Spirit and Truth , for the Father seeketh such to Worship him. And what is it to Worship GOD in Spirit and Truth , but to worship him by a truly holy Life , and an upright walking with him ? In this is his Delight , and who taketh this way to please him , shall be counted worthy of the Kingdom of GOD. Enoch walked with GOD , and it's said , GOD took him , that is , he took him out of this wretched Life , unto his Heavenly

Heavenly Glory, And all who tread the same paths, shall meet with the same Reward. GOD will take every one to himself who *walketh with GOD*, though not after the same manner. Death puts a stop to our *Walking with Men*, and forces us and them to part: but it doth not break off our *Walking with GOD*, it doth unite us more firmly to him, this fellowship which we thus begin here, results into an *Eternal Friendship and Society* in the other World.

## CHAP. III.

*Of these Words, And this Stone which I have set for a Pillar, shall be GODS House, The Reason and Meaning of them.*

**G**OD is to be Worshipped not only in *Private* but in *Publick*, he is not only to be Owned and Acknowledg'd a part, by our selves in Secret, but ought to be professed openly before all the World, by the Performance of such things as Reason and the universall Content of Mankind hath established, to be publick Testimonies of our Allegiance to him.



He who doth not this Last, can never be very sincere in the First; neither will GOD own such to be *true Worshippers of him*, who do not avowedly professe him before Men, according to that of our *Saviour, whosoever shall confesse me before Men, him shall the Son of Man also confesse before the Angels of God; but he that denyeth me before Men, shall be denyed before the Angels of God.* Luke. 12. 8. The very Light of Nature teacheth this, and therefore it is that when *Jacob* here did Solemnly take the LORD to be his GOD, he did not only engage himself to that *Inward Spiritual Worship*, which is acted within a Man's own self, whereof we have spoken already; but also he binds Himself to that *Outward and Visible Worship*, which is transacted by things without the Man, that it may be manifest to all the World that he Honour'd and Adored this GOD. *This stone, saith he, which I have here set up for a Pillar, shall be GOD'S house*, that is, here in this place where I erect this Stone, when I come back I will build and consecrate a House to my GOD, for the Honour of his Name, and the Celebrating of his Worship, where I will Call upon him and Pray unto him. The Reason why he pitched upon this particular place, was because GOD had made it eminent

ment by so signal an appearance unto him, as we read before; and what moved him to build a house to GOD; was because this, was universally agreed to, as an Act of Honour due unto GOD, and as an proper instance whereby men signify their Homage to him.

This which *Jacob Vowed* here, gives us Occasion to speak of *Churches*, or *consecrated places*, of *Prayer*, and of *publick Worship*.

## SECTION I.

*Of Churches or Places Consecrat to GOD; the Origine and Necessity thereof, what Regard and Reverence should be payed them.*

**A**ND First, as it is an *universal Custome* all the World over, to erect *Temples* and to *Consecrat places* for the Honour and Service of GOD: So this custome is most Ancient. At present there are not only *Churches* throughout all the *Christian World*: but *Mahumetans* and *Pagans* also have *Temples* and *Religious houses* of one sort or another, and it was so from the very beginning. It would seem that even our *First Parents* in *Paradise* had some more peculiar place for presenting themselves before

fore GOD; *Gen 3. 8.* And after the Fall 'tis certain, that there was a Particular place set apart for the *Worship of GOD*, whither *Abel* and *Cain* brought their sacrifices; *Noah* came no sooner forth of the *Arke*, but he built an *Altar* to the LORD: and in like manner we read of all the *Patriarchs* that where ever they sojourned they built *Altars*, which were usually ranged about either with *Trees* or *Stones*, where they and their Family *Worshipped GOD*, and performed all their *Solemn Acts* of devotion; their wandering course of Life would not allow them better; the *Tabernacle* which *Moses* pitched in the *Wildernels*, was the first house of *GOD* we read of, which was covered and adorned with Art, and it was followed and imitated by that magnificent Temple which *Soloman* built: Where all who lived at *Jerusalem*, and near it, resorted for the *Worshipping of GOD*; and whither all the *Males* even in the remotest parts of the Kingdom, were obliged to come up, at least thrice a year. But though 'twas not lawfull to offer Sacrifice except in that one place, yet there was every where besides both in *Towns* and *Villages*, in the *Cities* and open *Fields*, *Synagogues*, and *Oratories*, where people came to *Pray to GOD*  
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and to joine with others in His *Worship*, and to be instructed in His *will*. Of *Synagogues* there are frequent mention in the *New Testament*, and by severall things it may be collected that there were of them during the *first Temple*: but of *Oratories*, or places for Prayer, we read not so often, yet they be sometimes spoken of, as particularly, *Luke 6. 12.* where it is said, our *Saviour went into a mountain to pray and continued all night in Prayer to GOD*; but the Original will rather bear in the *House or Place of Prayer*. So likewise, *Acts 16. 13.* 'tis said of *Paul* and others, that were with him, being come to *Philippi of Macedonia*, they went on the *Sabbath day out of the city by a River side, where Prayer was wont to be made*, or where there was an usuall *Oratory*. Thus it is certain that 'twas frequent every where and in every Nation, to consecrate and set a part Places and Houses for the *Worship and Service of GOD*; 'tis well conjectured by the Learned *Mr. Mede*, from *Josh: 22. 16.* that these Lands and Countries were reputed unclean, where there was no such Consecrate or Devoted Places.

Now whither Men had an expresse Positive Precept, for the erecting houses to GOD, and consecrating such places to him, or if they were meerly prompted thereto by the  
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*light of Nature*, and the Strength of Reason, it doeth not very clearly appear. But however it is certain, that GOD did very much approve therereof; not only by allowing his most eminent Servants to continue in the use and practice of this thing: but also by requiring it of them. Thus GOD was so well pleased with *Noahs building him an altar*, that 'tis said *he smelled a sweet savour therefrom*; Gen. 8. 21. and 35. 1. we have God putting *Jacob* in mind of the *Vow* which he here made, and requiring him to make performance thereof in this very particular. When it first came into *Dauids* Heart to build an house unto the LORD, the motion did so please GOD, that he sent *Nathan* the Prophet to tell him, *that for this he would make a sure covenant with him, and establish the Crown and Throne upon him, and his house for ever; though for reasons he would not let him build the house, but deferred it to his Son Solomon.* 2 Sam: 7. And we must not look upon *Temples*, as a *Legall Ceremonie* agreeable only to the Times of the *Old Testament*, not proper or necessary now: for though GOD dwelleth not in *Temples made with mens hands*, and that his Worship is not fixed to one particular place, as 'twas of old, yet it's no lesse necessary now then formerly, to  
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Set a part Places and to consecrate Houses for the publick worship of GOD, that hereby he may be the more solemnly acknowledg'd, & that his Worship may be gone about with the greater Decency, Gravity, and Conveniency.

These were the *Reasons*, no doubt which moved Men to this Act first, and their strength and Force is as great now, and as binding as ever. Wherefore the *Apostles*, and first *Christians*, even such as was most zealous against *Judaisme*, did not think the use of Temples to be abolished by the *Christian Law*: but did continue the use of them, and were carefull to consecrate and set apart *Churches* where ever they made converts and did propagate the Gospel. For though the outward state of *Christians* was then but mean and though they were also lyable to many persecutions, yet they wanted not Houses for that Worship and service of God which was peculiar to the Gospel. This the Learned Man formerly mentioned, hath made very evident; and it appears clearly from 1 Cor. 11. 22. and from these salutations to particular *Churches* of such and such a house.

At first *Temples* and *Religious Places* were but mean, plain, and simple, without any great ornament: what the *Patriarchs* used seems to have been no other then open un-

covered places, set about with trees or Stones agreeable to their own way of living, which was not constant or settled in any one place; for they dwelt in tents only and removed from place to place. There be some remainders of such kind of simple *Oratories*, yet to be seen in many places of this Kingdome. But as People became more fixt and settled, and as they farther improved in art and cunning, so they used to take greater pains in adorning their temples and religious houses: and judg'd it to be their glory, to have them Stately and magnificent. *David* was ashamed that he himself should dwell in a house of *Cedar*, while the *Ark* of the LORD was only within *Curtains*. And GOD complained by the Prophet *Haggai*, that the People who returned from the *Captivity*, should have dwelt in *Cieled Houses* themselves while the Temple of the Lord lay wast and unrepaired. The *Churches* of the first *Christians* 'tis like indeed were not very fine, nor could much better be expected from them, if we consider the meannesse and poverty of their State, and what hazards they run by offering to meet together at all. They were then necessitate to content themselves with any place, though it had not the conveniency and adornments which they wished: but so  
soon

soon as the Emperours turned Christians, and that the publick exercise of the *Christian Religion* was allowed, then *Churches* were every where built Stately and magnificent. They did not then proceed by the scant rule of meer necessity, but rendred them not only convenient for themselves: but such as might speak out the greatnesse and glory of that God whom they adored. And though it cannot be denyed but that there may be an excesse in adorning Churches, when more is bestowed on them then on the poor which are GOD'S living Temples; yet certainly to have no regard of them, and to grudge any cost upon them, is an other extreme much more to be condemned; seeing GOD hath been so bountifull to us, and to enrich this World for our use not only with necessaries, but with comforts, and to make it not only convenient, but also very beautiful, pleasant and delightful: therefore I think gratitude should oblige us, to make an acknowledgement hereof, by adorning his temples, and taking care that these places of his *special presence*, have all the ornament and comlineffe, which our State and Country will allow. Sure by all the rules of the World, it cannot be judged otherwayes then a contempt of GOD, or at the least

small esteem of him, when his houses are the worst of the Land, as is usually to be observed throughout this *Kingdom*: nay in many places are to be seen *Stables* and *Byers* much more neat and handsome then the *Churches* beside them, which certainly is a most shamefull thing, and cannot but expose us to the contempt of all strangers. What a shame? and how unworthy a thing is it to be more curious about the apartment of our beasts, then the house of our GOD? GOD ordered his Son to be born in a Stable and in a Manger, to teach us humility and to be content with a mean State, but not to make us humble him thereafter by lodging him no better then our beasts. I am sory it should be said, because 'tis our shame, but it is true that we have many Churches, which look rather like barns byres and stables, and would be as proper for that use, then what they are design'd for. God did expressly prohibite under the law, the dedicating the worst things unto him, and I cannot understand what precept or example can be pretended forwarranding this under the *Gospel*: I would think *Nature* as well as *Religion* doth teach the contrary. GOD and Kings should be alwayes honoured with what is best, and there is reason that the *Courts* of both be beautified and



and Adorned with State and Splendour, that thereby that Reverence and Respect which is due from all who approach them, may be engendered, nourished & increased. But by *Adorning of Churches*, I doe not mean what is in use in the *Romish Church*, viz. Images, Lamps, Puppets, rare and various Curiosities, &c. which are of no use in the *Service of God*, and do but divert the minds of those who come up to Worship; gaudy shews are not *the true ornament of Churches* but what makes them Grave, August, and Venerable. And therefore the same Rules are to be observed in building of Churches, which Wise and Discreet Persons follow in their Cloaths, who seek out what is Decent and Useful, and are careful to shun both what is nesty and course, and also, what is Gaudy and Vain; because the one speaks out a *mean sordide Spirit*, and the other too much *lightness and childishness*.

But whatever *Churches* be as to their *external matter or form*, whither they be well or ill adorned, there is a *holy respect and reverence due unto them*; their having or wanting the *externall Ornaments of Art or Beauty*, does not alter their Nature, or make them more or lesse the *House of GOD*, which is the thing their very name imports, for *Kirk or Church* is



is from the Greek *κυριακον* which is as much as *the Lords*. And upon this account they should be had in *reverence*, more then for their Outward Pomp and splendour. Every thing which relates to GOD is *Sacred*, and should be reverently dealt with, and particularly *his Temples*; wherefore it is that the *Wise-man* adviseth, *to keep our foot when we go to the house of GOD. Ecl. 5. 1.* He there alludes to the common Custom of *pulling off the shoes in token of respect and reverence*, And though that particular Act be now out-dated and worn out of fashion, yet still 'tis necessary to carry reverently towards them; For GOD himself commands it, saying, *ye shall reverence my Sanctuary*, and the reason he gives is, *because I am the LORD; Lev. 19. 30.* Now this Reverence to the *House of GOD*, was no *Temporal Ceremonie* peculiar to the time of the *Law*: but even a *Moral Duty*, to be continued as long as it is necessary to keep up the use of *Churches* and *consecrated Places*, which will be ever necessary in this World; as doth appear from our Saviour's Zeal, in *scourging out of the Temple*, such as have profaned it, by *buying or selling therein*. And the *Apostle Se. Paul* inveighs against the *Corinthians* for that abuse which crept in amongst them in the *Celebration of the Lords Supper*, whereby in eat-  
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ing every one , did take before another , and one ~~was~~ hungry and another drunken : because as he tells them 'twas not only contrary to the Nature and Purport of the *Sacrament* , but also a contempt of the house of GOD , and a want of reverence towards it. *What* , saith he , have ye not houses to eat or drink in ? Or despise ye the Church of GOD ; 1 Cor. 11. 22. And when the same Apostle urgeth the not defiling the Body, because it is the Temple of GOD ; it is evident that he takes it as a certain and undoubted Truth, that what is the Temple of GOD should not be prophaned , or else his Argument would not be good or valid. Through all the World it is a custome to respect the Presence Chamber of Kings, and such places wherein they use to appear in Majesty and State, and to behave Reverently towards them , even when they are not Personally present : And how much greater Reason is there to pay the like Respect and Reverence to the *House of GOD* , and those Places where he uses to meet and bless his People, and where he is alwayes specially present, by the Attendance of his *Angels and Ministering Spirits* ? For that Churches are thus Honoured with the *special Presence of GOD* , seems to be very evident from the *Scripture*, both of the *Old and New Testament*.

GOD indeed is not in *Temples* so as to be included in them ; we must not think that his *Essence* can be shut up any where, wherefore in this 'tis true, *that He dwelleth not in Temples made with Mens hands* ; Nay, *the very Heaven of Heavens do not contain Him* : But how ever it is certain that He is and may be said to be more present in his *Temples and Churches*, then in other places.

When GOD is said thus to be more present in one place then another, it is either when there are some more visible *Effects* of His Presence by the conferring of special Blessings ; or when his *Heavenly Host* is there: for so *Jacob* here declared GOD to be in this place, because he saw the *Angels of GOD ascending and descending*. Now that GOD is present in his *Churches*, the first way appears from *Exod. 20. 24.* Where GOD saith expressly, *in all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will blesse thee*, upon which account the *Tabernacle*, was called the *Tabernacle of the Congregation or meeting*, not of Mens meeting, but of GOD'S meeting with Men. The like Promise our LORD gives us, *Mat. 18. 20.* Where he saith *where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.* And that he is also present the other way, viz. by the attendance

dance of his *Angels* and *Heavenly Host*, was not only the constant Opinion of the *Jews*, concerning their *Temple*; but is also expressed plainly by *Solomon*, *Eccl.* 5. 6. When he sayes concerning our behaviour in the *House of GOD*, *Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, neither say thou before the Angels that it was an error.* And in like manner, *St. Paul* pleads against the undecency of *Womens* being uncovered in the *Church*, because of the presence of *Angels*: for this cause, saith he, ought the *Woman* to have power over her head, because of the *Angels*; *1 Cor.* 11. 10. *Christ* telleth us, *Mat.* 23. 21 *That God dwelleth in his Temple*, and how can he be said to do it more there then else-where, but this way.

Now that we may make what hath been said usefull to direct our practice, we will proceed to draw some inferences. And first it teacheth us, that it is the duty of all those who would *Worship GOD* aright and who would manifest themselves to be his *Devoted Servants*, to take care to consecrate places for his Service, and to erect *Churches* for his *Worship* where there are none; and to contribute cheerfully to the maintaining and keeping them up where they are: for the Honour and Glory of *God* requires it, and *Nature* as well as *Scripture* teacheth this to be a proper

*Act* of Homage and acknowledgement due to GOD. It is the Duty of all who own and believe in him, to meet frequently together to *Worship Him*, and that *Worship* which is due unto him, can never be rightly performed, with *requisite solemnity and decency*, unless there be particular places *Consecrate* for it. And if there be no care taken, what sort of places these are, if they be suffered to be Mean, Nasty, Ordure, and Slovenly, it will very much lessen *Peoples* esteem for GOD and his Service: for whilst Men are in this World, they will be still creatures of Sense, and their Apprehension of things will be alwayes according to the *outward impression* they make upon their Senses. How comes it that the *meaner sort* especially, are lesse awed in the Church, then when they are in the houses of Lords and Gentlemen? but because in these they see something of Grandeur, but in the other nothing finer then what they have at home in their own silly Cottages.

Secondly, what *Jacob Vowed* and resolved on here, may be a fit Patern and Precedent to all the great Ones of the World, whose Quality and Condition makes it requisite for them to have great and Magnificent dwellings: viz. That they allow some  
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particular room in these their Dwellings, and Palaces, for a private Chappel and *House of GOD*, wherein they and their Family may dayly meet together to *Worship Him*. If they do not think their houses and dwellings convenient or answerable to their Grandeur, unlesse there be in them severall Apartments for severall Offices; me thinks also they should judge them defective, if they cannot allow one spare Room to be reserved for *GOD* and his dayly service. We would not have any believe us so *Superstitious*, as to think no *Prayers acceptable*, but such as are made in the *House of GOD* or consecrated Places; for without doubt, God will hear all who call upon him in *sincerity & truth*, where-soever they are: but yet there is great convenience & decency, in appropriating one particular place for the performance both of our *private and more Solemn Devotions* with the rest of the Family; for then we are not so lyable to disturbance and distractions: & therefore if our state & condition allow it, it were commendable to set apart some particular room of our house for this end only. It is not to be expected that the generality can win to this, yet those of the best Quality I think may, and if they may, they ought too: & if they would thus give *GOD* an Interest in

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their Houses and dwelling Places, we may very confidently say 'twould be their best security, *Except the Lord keep the house, they labour in vain that keep it*; and he would not fail to preserve and maintain that House and Family where he is so highly Honoured and devoutly served. But alas this is little looked to now a dayes! There be very few who regard much the *interessing God in their houses*, by the *consecrating* them or any part of them to him; and which is farr worle, who take any care to have *Him Worshipped* in their Families either inseparate or comon Rooms. This part of Religion is but little in request amongst the *Grandeers* of the World, it is laid aside as an Antick and unfashionable thing: and as their practice in other things is too ordinarily a Law unto the inferiour Sort of People, so 'tis very much to be regretted that it is so here. How seriously the *Heads of Families Worship GOD in their Closets*, we do not, and we cannot know; but 'tis too apparent, that there is but little care taken to have him Worshipped decently by all the Family together; nay, this is now scarce lookt upon by any as their Duty; *Joshua* thought it incumbent upon him, when he said, *as for me and my house we will serve the LORD*; as if he had said, *not I in my singl*

capacity, but I also with my whole Family; and not I only by my self alone in private, but I also with all my House; we shall be carefull to serve Him and Devotely to call upon Him: which certainly every one whose heart is sincere with GOD will endeavour to imitate. *Family Worship* becomes now the more necessary, that there is no *publick Worship* Evening and Morning in our Churches; if this were, Masters of Families should with their Families attend it, and so the want of the other might be much excused: but seeing we are not so happy as to have a *dayly publick worship*, every Family should serve God apart. And though as we have said, there be some reason for *setting apart particular Rooms*, for the exercise of *Family Worship*, by such as can do it conveniently; yet the want of such conveniency; needs neither be a hinderance to this necessary *serving of GOD*, nor will it excuse the neglect thereof. When we cannot serve God as we would, we ought to do it as we may, when we honour him as far as we are able, he will not impute the want of what is without our reach as a sin to us. Though there be no Room nor apartment in our house, but what of necessity must be put to common use; yet let us not neglect to offer unto  
GOD

GOD Evening and Morning the Sacrifices of Prayer and Thanksgiving, and they shall certainly find acceptance in his Sight. By doing this our House and Family shall be a *little Sanctuary* unto GOD, who will graciously vouchsafe to dwell in them, and to establish with us his *Comfortable Presence*, which should afford us greater Peace and quiet and Satisfaction, and should prevent those Unnatural Tarres and Disorders, which fall out too commonly amongst those of the same Family. If GOD were much among them, these things would not be; and he is not among them, because his Name is not *called upon*, nor his *Worship observed* by them.

*Thirdly*, we may see by what hath been said, how much it is our Duty to frequent the House of GOD; for as it is Religion to erect Churches and Temples, so 'tis with a Design to use them, and to come up unto them to call upon GOD, and to hear what he will say to us. When Jacob resolved to build GOD an House, he did not mean to shut the door thereof, and to be a Stranger thereunto; but to visit it often that he might have Opportunity of meeting and conversing with His GOD. If civility and kindnesse draw us to the House of our Neighbour; and if such as are about Kings Courts, be oblig'd to come and attend

end the *King's person* at those hours when the Court opens up, or that he presents himself; sure we should think our selves much more oblig'd to come up to the *House of GOD*, and to wait upon him at these times and hours which he hath appointed for meeting with us. What a Honour and happinesse is it to have the freedom to stand in *his presence*, and the Liberty to speak unto Him? The *Psalmist*, it seems, thought it a great happinesse when he cryed out, *Blessed is the Man whom thou choosest, O LORD; and causest to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodnesse of thy house, even of thy holy Temple. Ps. 65. 4.* And again, *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts, My soul longeth, yea fainteth for the Courts of the LORD. Blessed are they that dwell in thy House, they will be still praising thee. Ps. 84.* Hereby it appears that he looked upon the *Priests* and *Levites* as very happy, whose Office oblig'd them to a *continuell attendance on GOD'S House*; their Lot he thought was worthy of his ambition: for though he was a *King*, and upon that account might have commanded the Chiefest Pleasures and Delights of the Sons of Men, yet he undervalued them all in comparison of the Priviledge of being in *GOD'S House*. *A day in thy Courts*, saith he,



is better then a thousand; I had rather be a door keeper in the house of my GOD, then to dwell in tents of Wickedness. This favour he sought above all things, and preferred before all things, as he plainly tells us, Ps. 27. 4. where he saith, *One having have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the LORD, all the dayes of my life, to behold the Beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his Temple.* And certainly whoever comes up to the House of GOD, with a sincere Love to and desire after Him, shall receive much Comfort and Good thereby. It is not an Honour only, but an advantage also to be in GOD'S presence: for he still leaves a Blessing behind him and hath expressly promised to meet with us in His House to blesse us, as you have it, *Exod. 20. 24.* In token hercot the Ministers of GOD are appointed to blesse in His Name, as appeared from *Deut. 10. 8.* which in all Reason must be extended to *Evangelical Ministers*, seing GOD'S Goodnesse is not narrower, but larger then it was of old, We are not then to look upon *Pastoral Benedictions*, especially in the solemn assemblies, only as intimations of their own good wishes; but as *Authoritative declarations* of the Good will of GOD, which are effectually upon such as are worthy; See *Mat. 10. 13.*

Let

Let none therefore withdraw from the House of GOD, but let all accept of all Occasions of coming up thereto; as David who tells us, *I was glad when they said unto me, let us go in to the House of the LORD.* Ps. 122. 1. For our coming shall not be in vain, GOD will not suffer such as sincerely seek him to return without profite. *I said not to any of the seed of Jacob seek ye Me in vain.* Isa. 45. 19. They speak Ignorantly and unadvisedly, who say, they will not be the better by coming to the Church, and that they may profite themselves as well at home; For seeing GOD hath promised to be there, such as are truly dispos'd and seek Him in sincerity, shall undoubtedly find Him; they shall feel the influences of His Spirit moving on their Hearts, and shall be made to taste and see his Goodness, that by Experience as well as by Reason they may understand it is good for them to draw near to God. It is true God is not tyed to the Church or Publick meetings, but may & will manifest himself to his Servants also in other places; yet they are not likeliest to find him at home, who stay there out of a contempt of the Church, which is the place he himself hath appointed for a Solemn meeting with his People. We ought not to despise or neglect those means of Comfort and Happinesse which

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God

GOD hath prescribed, but to use them Piously and Thankfully; waiting humbly upon Him, that in and by them he may bless us. 'Tis a tempting of GOD, to expect or desire he should shew himself or convey his blessings by wayes extraordinary, while the ordinary means may be had. What is better then to find GOD? What is more desirable then to receive *Expressions of His favour*? And where shall we seek him? Or where may we with greater assurance expect these, then where he hath promised to be found, to wit, in *His House and Ordinances*? Let us then resort thither, and we shall find *Him whom our Soul Loveth*, who shall resolve our Doubts, and Advise us in the Way we should take; he shall ease our Hearts of our *Secret Grief*, comfort us against all our Troubles, and shall Refresh us with new Strength and vigour, to enable us to endure patiently to the End of our Race, that so we may obtain the *Crown of life*. I have known some (and I believe 'twill be found nothing extraordinary) who upon their coming to Church, have received a Resolution of their *Particular Doubts*, Comfort for their *Particular Troubles*, and who when they little expected it have had their present Case touched as if the Preacher had mainly aimed at them, when yet he  
neither

neither knew them, nor intended them. Weak *Preachers* will drop now and then good and usefull *Speeches*, and though their Discourse in the grosse be not Learned nor Eloquent, yet sometimes they let fall short sentences which may be, and often prove more beneficial - then more fine and Elaborat Sermons. I have known Digressions in Sermons, what is usually termed a running from the Text, more pertinent to some of the *Hearers*, then if the *Minister* had kept more close to his Subject, because they were thereby struck home, and hit upon some Particulars of their Condition which concerned them to understand, and to be rightly inform'd of. If then Men would but lay aside their *prejudices*, put themselves in a *Sutable Disposition*, and listen attentively, they might and without doubt should be Edified and Bettered by *coming to Church*. The apprehended weakness of him who is to Officiate, ought to be no discouragement, for GOD often useth *weak and mean things* to effectuat great Matters, & by what we account the foolishnesse of preaching, he doth save those that believe. Though there were no Sermon, it would be our Duty nevertheless to *come up to Church*, that thereby we may testify our homage to GOD and acknowledgment

of him: but however for our Encouragement, if we be sincerely desirous to *hear what GOD the LORD will speak, he will speak good one way or other.*

In the last place, when we come up to the *House of GOD*, we ought to be carefull to lay aside every thing which may offend, and be unbecoming *so Divine and holy a Presence*; while we are there, we should behave our selves *decently and reverently*; for if the presence of *Kings* over-awe us, how much more should the presence of *GOD* and *Angels*? It is improper and most unseemly to appear any ways light frothy & impertinent before *Kings*, especially when they are sitting in *Majesty*, and *State*, it is sure much more unworthy to be guilty of Indiscretion in the *House of GOD*, which is the *Place where God is alwayes present*, and that in *Majesty* and *State* too by the attendance of *Angels* and *Ministring Spirits*. It were far better not to approach the *House of GOD*, then not to be reverent when we are in it: he who staves away is but guilty of neglect which though it be a great sin, yet 'tis not so great as insolency & a downright affronting of *GOD*, which he is guilty of who laugheth, Sporteth, talketh idly, or any ways playeth the Fool within the *Church*, or sleepeth and snorteth away the time there



herein to the Scandal and disturbance of others; or who abstracts his mind from the *Service of GOD*, and imployes his thoughts in Worldly Matters. Such behaviour, and irreverent Carriage cannot but highly provock God, and obstruct our own Good and Benefite. If we do not meet with GOD when we come to Church, if he do not blesse us, if we find our selves no whit bettered, the reason must be our Irreverent and unseemly Behaviour, or some indisposition in our selves, for GOD is *alwayes ready and willing to manifest Himself*. Wherefore if we would see the Beauty of the Lord in his Temple; or if we would taste the goodness of his house; we must guard against those things which may provock him to withdraw himself from us. And must labour so to please him by a Humble, Devout and Reverent Behaviour, as that he may condescend to come and manifest himself to our souls for our edification and comfort. And to what purpose is it to come, if you be not resolved to do Reverence to GOD by coming? what a dishonour is done to the House of GOD? When you only come up unto it, because you know not otherwise how to spend the Time, or when you make it only a place for meeting with your neighbours where you talke about Newes and other Worldly

Worldly Affairs, and where you may be informed what Garb and Dresse is most in Fashion, or where you may Sleep and take your rest, or where without Disturbance you may ruminate on your Business and projects. as St. Paul said to the *Corinthians*, *have ye not houses to eat and drink in*, so I say, have ye not other places to do these things in? Or do ye indeed despise the Church of GOD,

Consider I pray you, that the Church  
 \* Vid. ( as St. Chrysostome saith \* ) is no Bar-Mede, lib. bers or Drug-sellers Shop, nor any o-  
 2. p. 439 ther Crafts-mans or Merchants Work-house in the Market place; but the place of Angels, the place of Arch-Angels, the Palace of GOD, Heaven it self; think near whom thou standest, with whom thou invokest GOD; namely with Cherubims and Seraphims, and all the powers of Heaven: Consider but what companions thou hast: let it be sufficient to perswade thee to Sobriety, when thou remembrest that thou who art compounded of Flesh and Blood, art admitted with the incorporeal Powers to celebrate the common Lord of all: when thou goest into a King's Palace thou composest thy self to Comeliness in thy Habite, in thy looks, in thy gate, and in all thy whole guise. but here is indeed the Palace of a King, and the like attendance to that in Heaven, and dost thou laugh? &c. I know well enough thou seest it  
 not.

not, but hear thou me, and know that Angels are every where, and that chiefly in the House of God, they attend upon their King, where all is filled with these incorporeal powers.

## S E C T. II.

## Of Prayer.

**H**AVING had occasion to treat of Churches or Sacred places, I judge it necessary to subjoine some short discourse on Prayer, seeing that *this* is the very use, & end of these: For upon this account the Church in Scripture is called *the House of prayer*. The very design of consecrate houses or Places, is that Men may have in them conveniency for Prayer; & thither men were wont to come, not only to joyne in the *publick Worship*, but also for the performance of their private Devotions. But because our Lord perceived that the resorting to such publick Places, so often as we need to pray, might Minister to pride and vanity, which spoile the odour of our Prayers, and hinder their acceptance with GOD; therefore he hath advised us, *Mat. 6.* to choole out the most

most secret and retired Places, for our Private Prayers and addressees to GOD: and though the place we pray in, have not the Honour to be appropriate to GOD, yet our Prayers shall find acceptance, if they be sincere and rightly qualified. Prayer doth in some sense sanctify the place, but the place can add no weight or worth to our Prayers. It may be more convenient for us to pray in one place more then another, but our Prayers will not be more acceptable to GOD upon the account of the place they are said in. GOD is every where, and we may freely addresse our selves to him any where, and where ever Men lift up holy hands in Prayer without wrath or doubting they shall be heard. If Churches be employed to any other use then prayer, and religious services, they are profaned. See *Mark* 11. 15. but it is not necessary, nor expedient to goe to *Church* each time we pray to GOD. The *Church* should be reserved for *Publick Worship* chiefly, but as for what we do apart by our selves, we ought to seek out Places of the greatest privacy to do it in, and as I said in the former section, if our State would suffer it, 'twould be very proper and convenient to set apart one particular Room of our House for this end, that

we may perform our Devotions with the greater freedom, and be less lyable to disturbance, and those interruptions which persons usually meet with who want this conveniency.

But to leave the circumstance of the place, and to come to the thing it self. Prayer is a speciall part of *Divine Worship*, enjoined by cleare precepts, recommended by the example of all holy Men, and so necessary that who prayeth not at all or but seldome, cannot be said to *Worship GOD*, whatever else they doe: For their other Acts cannot be properly referred to *GOD*, if they be not accompanied with Prayers. Our obligation to Prayer ariseth not from one, but from all the *Divine Attributes*; and by Prayer there is an acknowledgement of all of them: He who prayeth declareth *GOD'S Omnipotence, His Omniscience, His Omnipotence and All sufficiency, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.* But who neglecteth Prayer doth not believe these *Divine Perfections*; or doth not seriously consider them; he maketh no actuall acknowledgment of them, nay he lives in open defiance of them, and arrogates to himself an independency and self-sufficiency, which are *GOD'S prerogative.*



Again there can be no Intercourse with GOD, but by the means of Prayer. Without Prayer we can never arrive at the end of Religion, viz. *Union with GOD*, and participation of the *Divine Nature*. He who is not exercised in Prayer hath his Heart alienat from GOD, and is wholly indisposed for receiving the Spirit of GOD, and the impression thereof, without which there is no advancing towards perfection. Prayer is by some compared to *Breathing*, and not unfitly; for what *that is* to the Body, Prayer is to the Soul: respiration is no more necessary to our Naturall Life, then Prayer to the Spirituall Life, for hereby it is preserved: & as the stifling our breath ends our Life, so the ceasing to pray destroys the life of God in the Soul. The body which breaths not has no sense or feeling, nor is it capable of motion; even so the man who prayeth not, is without all due sense of GOD, neither maketh he any motion towards him. Prayer is a sign of Spirituall Life, and shews a desire and capacity to receive what is necessary to growth and perfection: and as the want of such a desire and capacity obstructs the communication of GOD'S Spirit, so where this is he will certainly manifest his Love, and bestow his Grace. To him who hath the de-

fire and capacity shall be given: He who asketh shall receive; he who seeketh shall find; and who knocketh it shall be opened unto him. *Mat. II. 12.*

But to make Prayer acceptable to GOD, and thus profitable to our selves; it must be rightly performed and duely qualified. true Prayer is alwayes acceptable as incense, and never failes to bring down a Blessing; but many deceive themselves with a meer shew; they are contented that they seem to Pray, but do not Pray really: some Pray much, but yet are never a whit nearer GOD, nor move more forward in Holinesse, which is both the undoubted Sign, and the certain Effect of true Prayer. We ought then not only to Pray, but to pray aright; else all the Labour we bestow this way is in vain. Ye ask, saith St. James, and yet have not; why? because ye ask amiss.

Now that our Prayers may be proper Prayers and effectually, first, We must take heed that they be the *Work of the Spirit*, and not the *Labour of the Lips*: For GOD is a Spirit, and will be Worshipped in Spirit and Truth, That is, by free and proper Acts of the Mind and not by empty shews which have no Solidity or Reality in them: If our Hearts be removed, he cares not for our drawing near with our mouth, or the

honouring him with our Lips as we learn from *Isa: 29. 13.* To prostrate our Bodies before GOD, and to let our Minds rove and wander, is to offer a dead Sacrifice which is no *Reasonable, or acceptable Service*; to utter words which we do not understand, or whose meaning we attend not to, is not to pray but to prat, it is to bable without sense, to make a sound which signifies nothing and deserves no more to be regarded, then the pronounciation of Puppets and Mechanicall Engines, which is performed by Wheels, and Springs without understanding. Our Prayers are but brutish gruntings, if they come not from the Heart and be not performed by the understanding. Wherefore when we are to Pray, we should first fix our Spirits, and compose our Minds to a serious Attention, and should endeavour to wind up our Souls to that fervour and earnestness which is Sutable to the weight and importance of Prayers: And to this purpose, it will be necessary to bestow some time in *Meditation*, and *Reading of the Scriptures*, or *some other devout book*.

Having thus reduced our Minds to a due Attention, and secured as much as possible against wandering thoughts; in the next place we must consider the *several parts of Prayers*.  
the

the Nature and Property of each, and the Affections suitable thereto, and frame our Prayers accordingly: For they cannot be acceptable if lame and defective, nor though they have all necessary parts, if each part be not rightly Adjusted and Properly qualified. To clear this better, we will touch a little on them;

The first part of Prayer is *Adoration* and *invocation*. This we should alwayes begin with, for as in our addresles to Kings and great Personages, we use first to do them reverence, and to testify their dignity before we present our requests: So in our ad'resses to GOD, we should first adore his Majesty and invoke his Audience. Now the right way to do this, is not to be acquainted with him with a heap of biggetitles; but to call to mind his *incomprehensible Nature*, and *Adorable perfections*, visible in his *manifold Works*. And if our apprehensions of GOD be worthy of him, we will be abashed at our selves as unfit for so great a presence, and most unworthy to be regarded by one so highly exalted above all our thoughts: To expresse which and to cherish it too, 'tis requisite to throw our selves in some humble posture. Thus the *Publican* to signify his own vileness, and GODS greatness, he stood



& far off, *and would not lift up his eyes, as the*  
*athousand of himself.* But let us reflecting a-  
 pon GODS Majesty and *Gracynesse,* should  
 take away the hopes of Acceptance, and  
 rather fill us with dread, then confidence in  
 him; we must remember his Goodness,  
 his Love, his Mercy, and how that he is  
 reconciled to us in his Son JESUS CHRIST.  
 Therefore our Saviour hath taught us to draw  
 near to GOD as in a Father, of his Ineffable Good-  
 these whole throne is in the Heavens, so un-  
 der the notion of a Father, who is always  
 ready and easie to be entreated: *When ye*  
*pray, saith he, say Our Father which art in*  
*Heaven, &c.* *Job 35. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*  
 Confession is another part of Prayer. This  
 must by no means be omitted, GOD re-  
 quires it; the rules of Justice and Equity  
 make it necessary, and there is no Remission  
 without it; he who confesseth hath  
 the promise of pardon, *but who covereth his Sins*  
*shall not prosper.* To perform this aright we  
 must consider both our Generall and parti-  
 cular State, and make an acknowledgement  
 of them: In the Generall we ought to ac-  
 knowledge what is common to us with all  
 others, that we are of a rebellious Race, miserably  
 corrupted, and prone to all evil; but we must  
 not rest here, but must subjoine also a con-  
 fession



Lesson of our own particular *failings*; y<sup>e</sup> all our *sinful*  
inclinations and actual transgressions; with their  
Aggravating Circumstances: for which  
purpose we ought to search our hearts, to ex-  
amine our Dispositions, and to take account  
of our Lives. But if we make only a *simple*  
Confession, it will avail us little; we must not  
confess our sins to GOD, as usual People do  
the offences they give one another, or some  
great Man; which they do clearly out of  
Complement, or out of Constraint to shun  
some present inconvenience; without any  
detestation of the thing: But as we must be  
ingenious in confessing our Sins; so we ought  
to confesse them with sorrow and contrition.  
Confession is a meer mockery, if it proceed not  
from an abhorrency at Sin; and be not atten-  
ded with indignation at our selves, and back-  
ed with unfeigned purposes to abandon Sin,  
and guard against it: wherefore when we  
confesse, it will be necessary to consider how  
very sinful act is a complex of Injustice;  
Ingratitude, Arrogancy, madness and Fol-  
ly; that sin is most loathsome in its Na-  
ture, and most mischeivous in its Conse-  
quences. But because GOD requires us not  
to remember and confesse our Sins; that we  
may be filled with despair: But to stir  
up in us desires of Mercy, and to prepare us  
for

for it: So having humbled our Souls with the sight of our sins, and wrought our selves to an earnest Desire of being delivered from the stain and Guilt of them, we should next support our selves with the comfortable consideration of *GODS infinite Mercy*, how that he is most ready and willing to forgive, and how that to make way for his Mercy to Sinners, he hath sent his own Son to satisfy for our sins, and to repair his Honour which by our sins is affronted and baffled; we should consider that *JESUS CHRIST* is the *True Sacrifice and Propitiation for sin*, which by Faith we should offer up to GOD and thereupon both ask forgivenesse and confidently hope for it.

A third part of Prayer is *Petition* or a humble Representation of our Desires to GOD; which he calls for, to teach us our Dependance on him, that *'tis in him we live, move, and have our being*, and that we may acknowledge Him the Authour and Giver of all good: To the right performance of this part, we must first have a sense of our own indigency, and a strong Faith in Gods Power and Goodness, in his Power that he is able, and in his goodnesse that he is willing to give us what we aske: For 'tis a vain thing to aske of another what we think we need

need not, or what we may get without him; and 'tis no less vain to address our selves to one in whom we have no Confidence, whose Power or Goodness we very much doubt. Now to perswade us of GODS Power and Goodness, and of our own Milery and Poverty, we need but to read the *Scripture*, call to mind the *Nature* and *Works of GOD*. and take an impartial view of our selves. *Secondly*, we ought to look to the Aime and Reason of our Desires that we have a right end before us; for if we have an evil intention, our Desires are sinful and unworthy to be presented to GOD, who is *most Just and Holy*, and who cannot be perverted from what is right. Our Desires therefore must not *terminate* in our selves, we must not intend our own Honour, Glory, Pleasure, &c: in this World; that must be the cheif end of our Desires and Petitions, which is the last end of our Life and Being, viz. GOD himself and his Glory. This our *Saviour* teacheth us in that *short Prayer* he prescribed; for there we are commanded in the first place to Pray that *GODS name be hallowed, that his Kingdom may come*; But this doth not debarr us from respecting our own *Eternal Felicity*, for the Glory of GOD, which we

should seek includes that ; in seeking the Glory of GOD , we seek our own *Eternal interest*, and we cannot aime at Heaven without aiming at the *Glory of GOD* : these two are inteparable. 3ly. We ought carefully to consider the matter of our Requests, that in this also they be good and proper , that is, agreeable to the will of GOD ; for it is not lawful for us to crave what he hath not approved. And therefore we must acquaint our selves well with the *Holy Scripture* , in which GOD hath revealed his Will , and thereby regulate all our Desires : what he hath allowed we may, what he hath commanded, we ought to ask ; but what he hath forbidden we should pray against. From hence it follows. 4ly. That we ought to pray with all earnestnesse for all *Spiritual Blessings*: but as for *Temporal things*, though we should Pray for them too , yet not *Peremptorly*, but with a *Resignation* to the wise Disposal of *GOD'S Will* : the Reason of this Difference is, because he hath absolutely approved of *Spiritual Blessings* , but hath declared otherwise anent *Temporall Benefits* ; and because he hath made it alwayes necessary for us to be Good, Holy, Chaste, Sober, Meek, &c. But it is not always expedient for us to have health and outward Peace, Prosperity , and other

*temporal*



*temporal good things*, nor is it expedient for us to know when they are fit for us. *Fifthly*, and lastly, each time we pray, we should not only consider our *general State* as Men and *Christians*, and ask what is agreeable thereto: But also our *particular Station*, the Condition of our Body and Soul, the tentations we are in or lyable to; and in a word, all the Circumstances of our Affairs both *Spiritual and Temporal*, and lay them open before GOD, and frame Desires suitable to each of these things: as a Man goeth to his Friend with a thing which befalls him, and as the Sick and Infirm make the Physitian acquainted with all their Distempers, so we should never fail to impart our State and all our Concerns to GOD, and to ask the Direction and Assistance he knows we stand in need of: Which being done in Faith of his Power and Good-will, as was said before, cannot but be a great Ease and Satisfaction to our Minds, because then we may have this confidence, *that we shall have the Petitions we desired of Him*; 1 John 5. 15. For as all things are possible to GOD, so all that is good and fit shall be done to them who believe in Him or rely upon Him; *Blessed are they who believe, for there shall be a performance of these things which are told them of the LORD.*

*Intercession* makes a fourth part of Prayer, this *St. Paul* enjoyns, *1 Tim. 2. 1.* and it is insinuated in the Tenor of the *LORD'S Prayer*, for that being prescrib'd to be a Form of *private Prayer*, and yet runing all alongs in the plural number; it teacheth us that while we pray for our selves, we should also be careful to hold up the concerns of others. Selfishness is contrary to the temper of the *Christian Religion*, and it renders our Prayers ineffectual; For *GOD* hears us and deals with us only according as we are disposed towards others, with what measure we mett it shall be measured to us. The *Apostle* requires expressly that our Prayers be without wrath, *1 Tim. 2. 8.* intimating thereby that where there is wrath, there is no acceptance; And according to the *Christian Law*, there is Wrath, where Kindness is not testified; he hates who does not love; he envies anothers Happiness, who does not heartily wish it: That therefore our Prayers may be effectual for our selves, we must present Supplications for others; that we may taste the goodness of *GOD*, let us not confine it to our selves, but heartily wish it extended to all the rest of the World. That *GOD* may be glorified in others as well as in us, thus it is our duty to pray for all Men, whom we must specify according to their various Conditions and Ne-



Necessities, because we cannot name every one in particular ; but *St. Paul* bids us pray, especially for *Kings, and those in Civil Authority*, in the forecited place, and for our *Spiritual Guides and Rulers*, in several of his *Epistles* : both because they have much need to be prayed for, and also in that the good of *Mankind* much depends upon them. And as *Nature* teacheth us to particularize those who are near or dear to us, so *Religion* requires us expressly to mention our *Enemies* : and if our hearts will not suffer us to do this, we need not pray at all, as our *Saviour* plainly intimats ; *Matth. 5. 23 6. 14.*

The *fifth Particular* whereof Prayer should consist, is *Praise or Thanksgiving*, this must be alwayes joyned to our *Prayers* according to the *Apostles Precept*, *Col. 4. 2. 1 Thes. 5. 18.* Very *Nature* teacheth us to be thankful to our *Benefactors*, and to make an acknowledgment of their Favours, so that an unthankful person has been ever esteemed among *Heathens* most odious ; what *Obligations* then are on us to give thanks to *GOD*, who is the great *Benefactor*, and who is even the *Author of all the favours which others confer* ? And we are the more oblinded to make this hearty and thankful acknowledgment, because tis all the *requital* he seeks, & all we

we can return for what he does to us: for we cannot be profitable to him again, as we may be to our *fellow creatures*, our requests & the desires of our heart are intimat by *thanksgiving*, as much as by *Formal Petitioning*, as appears from *Phil. 4. 6.* and moreover hereby, we in a manner lay obligations on GOD, both to continue the benefite, and also to *grant us what else we aske*: whereas by our unthankfulness, we provock GOD to withdraw his Blessing already bestowed, and to turn away from our Prayers; How unreasonable is it to desire or expect a kindness from him, to whom we have shewed our selves unthankfull, for what he hath already done? But because GOD measureth our Thankfulness not by our Words, but by the *inward sentiments and affections of our hearts*, therefore we should consider, *First*, the number of those blessings which God bestows on us, how they are almost, nay altogether *infinite*, for who can reckon up all the *Publick and Private*, the *Temporal and Spiritual Blessings* they enjoy, the Good they possess, and the Evils which they want? for as he gives the one, so he withholds the other. As the *Psalmist* speaketh, *Many, O LORD my GOD, are thy wonderful Works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which*



which are to us-ward : they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee ; if I would declare and speak of them , they are more then can be numbred. Psal. 40. 5. 2ly. The greatness of them, what matter of Content and Satisfaction they afford , especially such as are Spiritual , for without them we should be *Eternally miserable*. 3ly. *How freely they are bestowed*, for they are all *Acts of pure love in GOD*, being given without either merit on our part , or profite or gain to Himself. 4ly. *How undeservedly they are continued*, we rebell against GOD, grieve his Spirit , and give him dayly manifold provocations and yet he still loads us with his benefits: if any Parent received but the thousand part of these injuries from his only Son, he would certainly abandon him. By these considerations , we must labour to make our selves sensible of GOD'S Goodness towards us, and to estimate truly these expressions thereof we have received, that our affections towards him may be enflam'd , and that our Souls and all within us may be stirred up to bless and magnifie his holy Name .

These are the several parts of Prayer which if persons please they may rank other-ways, for 'tis not material what particular method be observed : but by this view we have given , it appears that Prayer is some-  
what

what more then a bare repetition of Words; that to pray well and effectually, there is more time and greater deliberation requisite then People ordinarily imagine, or what I fear the most bestow. It we would have our Prayers avail or take effect, we multiply them seriously, and allot some time for the right performance of them. And here none ought to pretend, *that their business will not suffer this*; for though upon some urgent Occasion or particular *emergency*, Men may be allowed to shift or abridge their Prayers: Yet it is not lawful for any to let the Ordinary or Daily Business of their Callings, so take them up as not take time to retire and pray in that manner we have shewed; for this were to prefer Earth to Heaven, the Body to the Soul, the cares of this Life to those things above; whereas our *Saviour* bids us seek first *the kingdom of GOD, and his righteousness*. The Servant that is most strictly kept, hath time allowed to *eat, drink and sleep*, & the Man of the greatest business if he be Master of himself, will allow himself some leasure to talk with his Friends or Neighbours; and why also should not every one seek out some proper time for *Praying to GOD*. 'Tis true, People may lift up their Hearts to GOD while at work, and indeed

indeed they ought to be ever darting up *Pious Ejaculations*, wherefore we are commanded *to Pray alwayes*, and herein also *Prayer* is like to *Breathing*, that it ought to be continual and joined to all other *Exercises*. But these *short Ejaculations* or *occasionall Prayers*, will not serve in steed of such Set and Solemn Prayer as we have been speaking of, which GOD necessarily calls for, which all *Holy Men* have taken care to perform, *some severintimes*, some *thrice a day*, and which none ought to do seldomer then *twice*, viz. Morning and Evening: and those who fear that their *Daylie business* hinder them from *plying Prayer* so seriously as they ought, should set a Day of the Week, or once a Moneth, for redressing their *Daylie Omissions* in this Matter. And indeed none ought to grudge at the time they imploy in *Prayer*, even upon a *Worldly account*; for though the *hours* we steall from our *Callings* to *Pray* and *Meditate*, may seem to obstruct our interest, and to hinder our Thriving; yet on the contrary, they shall bring a *secret Blessing* on the *other hours* which remain, and make them as much or more for our gain then twice as much time: *All these things*, saith Christ, *shall be added unto you*.

I cannot now adduce all the Motives to

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Prayer

Prayer, for they might be sufficient for a Volume. I shall at present content my self to say, that as *Prayer is necessary, so it is the most pleasant and profitable exercise*; it Sanctifies for our use what we receive here, and secures the better things of the Life to come; it sweetens adversity, and keeps us from surfeiting on Prosperity; it is delightful in times of Peace, and disburdens our Hearts of Grief in times of Trouble; and in a word is the greatest privilege we enjoy on Earth. But we must remember that we hold it only by *Jesus Christ*, and therefore we must ever conclude our Prayers in *His Name* and present them *through Him*.

### S E C T. III.

#### *Of Publick Worship.*

**W**Hat Obligations are on us to worship GOD in private retirements, and how we should order these *secret Addresses*, we have laid out in the former Section. But we must not think that we have sufficiently served GOD, when these *Private Devotions* are performed; we must also worship Him openly. in the view of all the World, with those  
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who hold the same Faith and Profession with our selves : and without we pay this *publick Service*, our Sincerity in the other does not, yea cannot appear, as we have already insinuat Sect. 1st. of this Chapter, where we shewed *our Obligations to frequent the Church or House of GOD.*

But because the *publick Worship of GOD* is so much disregarded now a dayes, and every Person is so ready to quarrel with what is Established, and to take upon them to Model it; therefore we have thought fit to treat here of somewhat particularly, and to shew *First*, the necessity of this *Worship*. *Secondly*, the time to be appointed for the performance thereof. And *Thirdly* the Nature and Matter of it. As to the *First*, concerning the Necessity of *publick Worship*, it will not be needfull to insist much in proving it; for though there be many who slight the *Publick Worship of GOD in their Practice*; yet we hardly think there will be any who will take upon them to Justify their practice, by alledging the *non-necessity of Worshipping GOD publicly*: And if any person should be so hardy as to doe it, he should herein not only set himself against all *Christians* of what ever *Perswasion*, but also should oppose the *Sentiments and Practice of all Mankind.* As the

beleife of a *Deity* hath been every where received, so all People have ever look'd upon themselves as oblig'd to *Worship GOD publickly* according to the knowledge they had of him. The *Jews* to whom GOD revealed himself, were both enjoyned such a *Worship* and directed how to do it; and the *Gospel* only abrogate the *Ceremonial part* of the *Law*, it still retains and confirms such Customs and Practices as are useful and agreeable to the Nature thereof, and this is one of them: therefore the *Apostles* and *Private Christians*, continued to assemble themselves publickly as the *Jews* did, only taking care to *adapt their Worship to the Christian Law*. Our LORD supposeth, that His Church will have *publick Meetings*, and to encourage them here he makes a special promise; *Mat. 18. 19.* St. Paul finds fault with those who for fear of persecution *foresooke the Assembling themselves together.* *Heb. 10. 25.* It is not only necessary that we *Believe with our Hearts*, but we must also *confess with our Mouth.* *Rom. 10. 12. Mat. 10. 32. 33.* And as we are thus oblig'd to a *publick profession of GOD and Religion*, so by the same Reason to a *publick Worship*: for this is the Badge and Evidence of that. And as the *Glory of GOD* requires him to be *worshipped Publickly*, so the  
Edification

Edification of others, *for hereby saith the Apostle, we provock one another to love and to Good Works; Heb. 10. 24.* Finally, our Private Interest, and the Concerns of the *Common Wealth* where we live, oblige us to meet together, to call upon GOD, that by the Importunity and Strength of our *united Prayers*, we may procure all necessary Blessings. Upon these considerations we are oblig'd to attend the *publick Worship of GOD*. And nothing can justify our withdrawing from it, except those we live among require our compliance with some thing sinful and which we know to be offensive to GOD.

Having thus seen the necessity of *publick Worship*, it clearly follows from hence that here must be some *set time appointed for it*. And seeing the Reasons which oblige to his *Worship* are alwayes in force, therefore that it may seem continued too, there must be no considerable distance betwixt the times appointed for the performance thereof: there is a Cessation of the *Worship*, if the returns of these times be not Frequent; for Men are said to leave off that, which they do seldom: or then there is need or occasion of doing it. Upon this account even these who had no more then *Natural Light*, have thought themselves tyed to a *dayly Service* in their Temples; the

the *Pagans* and *Mahumetans* do still Assemble themselves several times a day GOD enjoined his *People of Old* a *Sacrifice Morning and Evening*, *Exod.* 29. 38. At which time also *Publick Prayer* was wont to be made, as appears from *Act.* 3. 1. And though *Sacrifice* could only be offered in *Jerusalem*, yet the *Jews* who lived elsewhere observ'd those hours, came up to their *Synagogues*, and made *Prayers* to GOD jointly, which is the constant Practice of that People to this Day, as *Buxtorf* and some others tell us. Now as I hinted before, CHRIST and his *Apostles* did not abolish such Customs and Practices as were *Moral* and tended to the *Glory of GOD*, or *Edification of Men*, but recommended them to be continued among *Christians*; *Sacrifices of Beasts*, 'tis true, are not required nor is there any use of them; but *Sacrifices of Prayer and thanksgiving*, these *Calves of our lips* are no less exacted by the *Gospel* then the other by the *Law*. And I cannot see why the one should be continued under the *Law* and the other discontinued under the *Gospel*; the *Apostles* thought there was as much Reason for the one as the other, wherefore they and their *Converts* continued to serve GOD daylie by such publick *Prayers and Worship*, as is evident from *Act.* 2. 42. 46. Which Custom was kept up in the Church



*Church* afterwards, and certainly the want hereof is such a defect, as doth more then spoil the Beauty of a *Church*; it is a main cause of the decay of all *true piety*: and therefore the ignorance and stubbornness of the *Generality* of this *Nation* is much to be lamented, which discourage our *Governours* from Establishing this *Daily Worship of GOD* in *Towns*, *Cities*, and other populous *Places*, which I may confidently call a *Necessary*, as well as a *Reasonable Service*.

But as we ought thus to hallow every *Day*, by devoting some part thereof to the *publick Service* of *GOD*; so we are oblig'd to Sanctify for this end one whole *Day* in seven, viz. the first day of the *Week*, commonly called the *Lord's Day*, partly because of its being peculiarly consecrate to the *Service of GOD*, and partly because of that *special Honour* which the *LORD JESUS CHRIST* conferr'd on this *Day*, by his *Triumphant resurrection from the Dead*, which was the Reason for its consecration: we should set a part one day of the seven, not that this portion appears necessary by *Natural Light*, but because 'twas expressly exacted of the *Jews*, and that we are unjust if our expressions of *Piety* and *Devotion* towards *GOD* be lesse then what was taught of them; and what obligeth us to the ob-

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servation of the *first day particularly*, is the practice of the *Holy Apostles*, who either had an expresse command for what they did themselves and enjoyned others in the *Worship of GOD*, or were led thereto by the *holy Ghost*. Now their practice in this particular is declared to us *Act. 20. 7. 1. Cor. 16. 2.* And is witnessed by a constant *universal Tradition of the Church*.

Besides the *LORD'S Day*, no other is strictly necessary to be kept, except in obedience to our *Rulers Civil and Ecclesiastical*; who without all question may (as well as the *Jewish Church* and State formerly) appoint dayes for the *publick Worship and Service of GOD*, upon the account either of some particular emergency wherein *Church or State* is concerned, or of some special Mercy granted them. But they ought to be careful neither to burden People with too many such appointments, nor yet to give them a disgust by ordering *Solemn Dayes* upon mean & silly accounts: if Men be not serious in their *solemn Addresses*, they are a meer Mockery and Dishonour to *GOD*; and it is impossible to make them Serious when the cause and occasion of them is frivolous and unworthy to be made the matter of *Divine Worship*. And so the *Church of Rome* has miserable

bly transgressed, for *first*, she hath so multiplied her *Fasts and Festivals*, that the number of them almost exceeds the dayes of the Year; the year would need to be enlarg'd, if all their *Holy Dayes* should be distinctly and exactly kept. And though it be pretended that all are not required to observe each of them; yet there be too many imposed upon every person and every place, so that the *French King* was necessitate to deall with the *Pope* lately for the dispensing with a great many in his Kingdom. Again the *Church of Rome* is not only to blame for enjoinning such an intollerable burden of dayes, but also because the Reason of these injunctions, for the most part, are frivolous scarce worthy of a Man's serious attention, much lesse of being the matter and occasion of *solemn Devotions*, as for example the invention of some pitiful Relicts, the dedication of Bells, some ridiculous passage of their *Legendary Saints*, &c. and as most of their *Holy-dayes* are in honour of their *Saints*, so the most of their *Saints* according to their own relation did nothing memorable, their lives are more Foolish and impertinent then Old Wives Fables, or the Tales of Children, as we might shew by several instances did we not fear to be tedious.

But leaving this, we come next to speak

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to the *Nature of this Worship*, which should be payed unto GOD publickly, and to shew the Particulars whereof it should consist, which ought especially to be considered.

And First, as to the *General nature of this Worship*, it must first answer the end thereof, which is the *Glory of GOD*, the *Celebration and Praise of his Greatness*, *Wisdom*, *Goodness* and other *Glorious perfections*; that the *Souls of the Worshippers* may be enflamed with the love of GOD and that they may be excited to Fear, Trust, and Obey Him.

2ly. It must be agreeable to the Will and Mind of GOD, and altogether free of what he hath forbidden, or signified his displeasure with: otherwayes it will be so far from being acceptable, that it will be very abominable.

3ly. It must not only contain all the parts of *Natural Religion*, but besides carry *Characters of the Gospel*, for it is not only Reasonable, but Necessary that the *Worship of GOD* be Regulate by *special dispensations of his Grace*, and made to expresse the particulars of such *Dispensations*. the *Jews* were required to *Worship God in a different Manner* from what is discernable by *Natural Light*; and so those who believe the *Truth and Mysteries of the Christian Religion*, must have a *Peculiar Worship*, that is distinct from such as own no *Revelation* or only that of the old Testament.



Fourthly, from these considerations it follows, that *Christians* must *Worship GOD together, in spirit and Truth*: For so our Saviour directed us, *John 4. 23.* Where he saith, *The hour cometh, and now is, when the true Worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and Truth: For the Father seeketh such to Worship him, GOD is a Spirit, and they that Worship, must Worship him in Spirit and Truth.* Which words, whither we consider them abstractly & in a general notion, as delivering a certain *Natural Truth*, or with a reference to the way of *Worshipping GOD* then usual in the World. I say, which way so ever we consider them, they teach us that *GOD* will now be *Worshipped*, not by a *Multitude of carnal and external Observances*, or a number of *Mysterions* and almost *unintelligible rites and Ceremonies*, as the *Gentiles* used to doe, and as he thought fit for a time to impose upon the *Jews*: But by actions of a *Spiritual Nature*, and whole signification and use is Reasonable and easily understood. The Law considered Men as in a weak Infant State, and so prescribed a *Worship* suitable to such a State; but the *Gospel* endeavours to bring us to the full *Stature of perfect Men*, and considers us as such, and therefore our way of *worshipping GOD* now

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must speak out more perfect Reason and understanding. The worship required of *Christians* is not a *Pompous shew of Ceremonies*, which may affect Children or Childish Persons; but *Real and Substantial expressions of Faith, Love, Fear, Joy, and Confidence in GOD*: There must not be more, or other Ceremonies used in the *Worship of GOD*, then what is requisite for Order and Decency, or necessary to Excite and Fix the *inward attention of our minds*; for that is not True or proper *Worship* which is wholly *External*, and doth not come from, and is not performed by the *inward Mind*. Thus in a word as we should *Worship GOD in Spirit and Truth*, So to *Worship in Spirit*, is to *Worship with the inward acts and Affections of the Soul*, and to *Worship in Truth* is to perform such *Outward Acts* as doth not *Mystically and Figuratively* but plainly and properly, signify and hold forth these *inward ones*.

Having thus viewed the *Nature of Publick Worship in General*, we passe to the consideration of the *parts thereof In particular*.

And *First* the *Publick Worship of God* should consist of *Prayers*, this is so clear from, *Scripture, Reason, & the practice of all the world*, that it were a vain thing to prove it: the *parts and Qualifications of Publick Prayer*, are the

the same with those of private *Prayer*, whereof we have spoken already. And because it is so useful to know before hand what we should Pray, and so unworthy a thing to utter rash and indiscreet expressions before GOD, especially in publick; therefore the *Church* in Ages have ever thought themselves obliged to compose deliberately *Forms of publick Prayer*, and not to leave them to the extemporary effusions of him who officiates; there is not at this day any *Church* (except our own) *without a publick Service and Liturgy*: But because we are driven to the necessity at present, not to use one, therefore it is incumbent on the *publick Ministers* to take the more care in composing their *Prayers*, that their expressions be grave & Decent, & that as to the Matter of them they contain all things proper & necessary, & nothing disagreeable to God, or which may disgust & stumble the *Worshippers*. They should study to make their *Prayers* to express truly the general needs & desires of the People; for he who *Prayeth* is their mouth, employed to speake in their name, what every one should do if they were allowed to speak: & so all *publick Prayers* should be so ordered, that every one may be able to joine heartily with them. And here I cannot passe two faults ordinarily committed in this part of  
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*publick Worship*, the one for the most part in Country Parishes, the other generally both in City and Country: by this last I mean a careless unconcernedness in Prayer, many think not themselves obliged to joyne with the *Minister* while he prayes, they do not consider that he is but their voice, & that 'tis necessary for them to say with the heart what he does with the mouth, else the *Prayers* cannot be heard as theirs; or for them. Though one Pray but audibly to shun confusion, yet it is necessary for all to assent thereto. The other Fault is committed often by the *Common People* ( especially in the *Northren parts* of the Kingdom, as the former in the *Southren parts*) who fall to their particular *Prayers* when the *Minister* is praying in the *name of the whole Congregation*: this is an irregular and undecent thing which obstructs the Edification Designed by this part of Worship, see 1. *Cor.* 14. 26. When the congregation cometh together, it should be with *one Heart and Mind*, they ought not to have different exercises but alwayes the same; they should pray one and the same Prayer *with one accord*, as we read the *Disciples* did *Act.* 4. 24. To prevent both these Evils, it 'twas usuall in all, both *Jewish* and *Christian Liturgies* to Appoint the People to utter sometimes some short sentences,



es, and alwayes to speak out audibly, *Amen*, at the conclusion of every Prayer, as is intimate to us, 1. Cor. 14. 16.

Another Act of *Divine Worship* especially in *Publick Assemblies*, is *singing of Psalms and Spiritual Songs*. This was alwayes a part of the *Worship of GOD* under the *Old Testament*, 'twas observed by our *Saviour* with his *Disciples*, Matth. 26. 30. And *St. Paul* enjoyns it to all *Christians*, Eph. 5. 19. Col. 3. 16. Singing *Hymns* and *Psalms* is of great use in the *Service of GOD*, both to prepare our Minds for it, and to make us take Pleasure in it. It fixeth our thoughts, elevats our Spirits, fills us with Joy in *GOD*, and leaveth on our Minds a deeper impression of *Divine Truths*, then almost any other part of *Religious Worship*: for which cause it hath been an *universal practice* in the *Church* through all Ages of the World.

And as *Singing* is our Duty, so the *Psalms of David* are excellently fitted for this purpose, they furnish us both with proper Matter and apposite Expressions: They were dictate by the *Spirit of GOD* to be employed particularly in this *Divine exercise*; and we must not think the use of them to have ceased with the *Law* or *Jewish state*; no certainly they are still usefull to the *Church* and

and proper for the times of the *Gospel*. Without doubt *S. Paul* in the forecited places, and *S. James* Ch: 5. 13. Are to be understood of the *Psalms of David*, because the tittle of *Psalms* has been always appropriate to them. And from this Injunction of the *Apostles* conformable to their Practice, and which is most Reasonable and usefull, the *Church* hath ever used these *Psalms* in her *Publick Service*.

I know there are some who not only scruple at some of the *Psalms*, but say expressly *they ought not to be sung and when it is done they refuse to take a part*. But truly I think there is no Reason for this. Indeed all of them are not proper for all occasions, some are more pertinent and suitable at one time then another, and therefore they who have the ordering of the *Publick Service*, should make a Prudent choice of *Psalms* suited to the occasion, however all of them may be sung and because People have not their own choise, but must take them as they are prescribed; I will here propose some Considerations to shew how we may freely joyne with any *Psalm* and both sing it with understanding and also with edification.

First there can be no Question of those *Psalms*, which Declare the *Divine Attributes*  
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Display the *Works of GOD*, hold forth the excellency of his word; or the *General State of Man*. To Sing and Meditate on these cannot be improper at any time, but alwayes usefull and seasonable.

2ly. As for those *Psalms* which were Writ upon particular Occasions, besides the *Literal* sence which relates to those Persons, their actions and circumstances upon which account they were penned; there is a *Mystical* sence belongs to them which referres them to *Christ* and his *Church*; and moreover, they are capable of being accommodated to several Conditions and Circumstances both of *Private Persons* and *Publick Societies* by allowing some Liberty to *Figures*, *Allegories* and other *Poetical Strains* which are usual in *Songs* and *Hymns*: Now though we should be little concerned in the *Literal sence*, yet we are in the *Mystical*. and if they will suffer an accommodation to our selves or the *Church and State* we live in, then we not only may use them, but the use of them will be both pleasant and edifying.

3ly. These *Psalms* which contain narrations of the *Wonders which GOD wrought for the People of Israel*, or the *Special mercies conferred upon them*, or *David* in particular, they are very proper to be sung; for besides that we

ought to celebrate the Praises of GOD for his goodness to others as well as our selves, and that all the world are concerned in these favours heaped on the Jewish Nation, because they served to Usher in the Gospel and contributed to the Manifestation of the Son of GOD. I say, besides these two Considerations, those Acts of GOD towards his People in former times, are instances of his Power and Goodness, and so proper matter for his Praise; they are also grounds of our hope, and Motives to trust & confidence in Him both for our selves and the Publick; see Rom. 15. 4.

4ly. GOD'S plagues upon the Heathen and his punishments upon His own People, are instances of GOD'S Justice and Holiness, and therefore the Psalms which narrate these may be sung to put us in mind, that he is not a GOD who hath pleasure in wickedness, and that no relation to him will excuse sin, or hold off judgments, if his Laws be broken. And so they are useful to stir up our repentance lest we likewise smart, and our thankfulness for what forbearance and gentle dealing we have met with.

5ly. The Psalms where David layeth out his own Troubles, and the successe of his Enemies are to be meditate on, as Proofs that the Just will be afflicted and the wicked prosper



perous, to teach us Patience and Contentment. The high Assertions of his Integrity and Uprightness, and Love to the Law of GOD, &c. We should sing, thereby to testify, that it is our Duty to endeavour this way to please GOD, and that without these Endeavours we ought not to lay hold on the Promises, nor presume to crave the Privileges of His Children.

6. The *Psalms of imprecations* are most scrupled at, but it is because persons are not at the pains to take a right view of them: for whatever was the particular Occasion of them, or whom ever they were primarily designed against, we should consider them now as intimations of the *Divine vengeance towards obstinate and incorrigible sinners*, and as *declarations of the irrevocable Sentence which his justice hath passed against them*. Nay, I may say this is the special intent of them, for if they had been only to vent *David's* private wrath, and emnity, GOD would not inspired them, nor approved of them. And it is no less lawful & proper sometimes to sing them, then to meditate on the heavy judgements & severity of God towards impenitent sinners; that thereby a wholesome *fear of God* may be excited in us. By them also we may be supported against those tentations which arise from suc-

cess of the Enemies of God, & their insolency in opposing the Truth and oppressing his People: And as it was never thought unlawful in times of Warr, and publick Trouble and Disorders to pray against the unjust authour and instruments thereof, not that GOD would damne their Souls, but that he would defeat their Devices, give them shame and confusion, and by his Judgements on their Persons, put them in fear to carry on their wicked enterprises; and all this not to satisfy our revengful Passions; but that it may be known *there is a GOD who ruleth the world, and who will defend the innocent and righteous to the end all people may be engaged to put their trust in him.* So I doe not see why it should be thought improper on such occasions to sing these *Psalms*, and to *waite patiently for the accomplishment of them.* They are very unreasonable and unjust who would wrest this to the countenancing of *private revenge*, and the *cursing of Enemies*, whither *publick* or *Private*, for its not lawful for us to doe, what GOD doth as he is *Supreme judge*, and by vertue of his *soveraign authority*, *vengeance is mine saith the Lord*, it belongs to him to punish, but not to us; and as it is not lawful for us to take Vengeance, because GOD doth it; so neither

ner is it unlawful to meditate on the just judgements of GOD, to sing of them, and to give our assent to them, because we are forbidden to curse or revenge our selves.

7ly. It is alledged against some *Psalms*, that we cannot turn them to Prayers, or if we should they would not be true as from us, and therefore it is not fit to sing them: But to this may be answered, that *there is a difference between praying and singing*; every Prayer may be made a Hymn or Song of praise, but that may be fit to be Sung which cannot properly be Prayed. In Prayer we turn our Minds wholly to GOD himself, speake to him, and therefore it is necessary that our Words be strictly true and suitable to our *Particular State*: But in singing we speak not so directly to GOD, as of him to others. Singing is a mutual calling upon one another to *Laud and Praise* GOD, together with a proposal of what makes for his Glory; and therefore it is proper enough to sing any thing which makes for the Glory of GOD, though it do not quadrate with our own case in all Circumstances.

But as we have made it thus appear that all the *Psalms of David* may be sung properly and with Edification, so we do not say that

hat none other may be sung, it is certainly lawful to have other Hymns besides, and most Reasonable to have some more appropriate to the Gospel and the Mysteries revealed therein, that our Worship in this as well as in other things may be distinguished from that of Jews. Pliny in his Letter to Trajan, tells that the Christians were wont to sing a hymn to CHRIST as to GOD, which must have been some other then the Psalms of David, wherein there was some more express mention of CHRIST, or which had some more peculiar reference to him, then what is to be found in these Psalms. It is impossible to give any Reason why the Hymns of the N. T. should not be used as well as those of the Old, seeing the same Spirit dictate both, and that there is some special propriety in them to the Christian Faith. And as for the Doxology, the questioning its lawfulness, bewrayes such Ignorance or humour, that I think it needeth to prove the use of it: if People would lay aside their prejudices, they might easily discern it very fit and proper to joyn this to each Psalm, for thereby we give the Psalm an Evangelical sense & make it referre to every Person in the Holy Trinity, who as they are undivided in their essence, so they should be united in our Worship and as they are distinctl  
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revealed to us, so we ought in all our Devotions to pay them distinct and particular Worship.

3dly- The reading of the Holy Scriptures is a necessary part of Gods publick Worship. This was used in the Jewish Assemblies as appears from Neh. 8. 8. Luke 4. 16. Acts 13. 15. 15. 21. St. Paul expressly chargeth The reading of his Epistles, Col. 4. 16. 1 Thess. 5: 27. And for the same Reason the rest of the Scripture ought to be read, and the Church has been still in use to do so. Now the main Reason hereof, is not our own instruction, but to do honour to GOD, for as hereby we own the Scriptures to be from GOD, so we solemnly acknowledge our selves bound to bear and obey his word, and tye our selves to walk as it direct us. The publick Worship of GOD is not rightly performed, when there is no reading of Scriptures; and it is all one almost as if they were cast out of the Worship, when they are only read while the People are coming to Church, but not after they are mett: For then the reading is only used for a divertisement to put off the time, and not as a Honour or Acknowledgement due to GOD. They understand little of the Nature or end of publick Worship, who would have the reading of Scripture laid aside, because it can be done at home, Such have  
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more regard to their Fancy, then to the *true honour of GOD*; and do come to Church rather to feed an impertinent Curiosity, and desire of Novelty, then to perform a reasonable Service to GOD. Not to speak of the inability of a great many to perform this exercise in Private, the reading at home makes not so much for the Honour of the Scriptures, and consequently of GOD who is the Author of them. Respect to the Majesty and Authority of GOD require that his Will and Pleasure be Promulgate with solemnity, and heard with reverence. We have an eminent Instance hercof, *Neh. 8. 5, 6.*

4thly, To the *reading of the Scripture* was alwayes wont to be joyned Preaching on the *Sabbath* and other *Festival-dayes*; as appears from the forecited places, which custome the Church hath continued, and it is most necessary and profitable, It shews our deference to GOD, and a regard for his Authority, when we are willing to hear such as he hath Commissioned to inform us of his Will anent us. *He that heareth you, saith Christ to the Apostles, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and him that sent me.* Kings and Princes are Honoured or Affronted according as their Servants and messag

message are received : now the Ministers are Ambassadors in CHRIST'S stead, by whom GOD beseecheth People to be reconciled unto himself. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Reconciliation with God is the Errand on which Ministers are sent, and seeing the terms of this Reconciliation, and the means by which it is wrought, are set down in *Scripture*, therefore the subject matter of preaching should be to give the sense and meaning of the *Scripture*, and to exhort to a Compliance with what is there contained. Sermons are not ordained to teach men curious things, or to tickle them with fine neat speeches ; but to make them understand the Scriptures, to instruct them in the Doctrine thereof, and to stir them up to observe the same, thus *Ezra* preached, *Neb.* 8. 8. And ordinarily in the primitive Church, their Sermons were only Explications of such Portions of *Scripture* as were read in the *publick Service*, together with an Exhortation to obey it. The principal design of Preaching is to unfold the meaning of *God's Word*, and to help men to discern the mind of the Lord revealed therein ; and as these are the best and most Edifying Sermons which discover this plainly and clearly, so it is the duty of all to hearken diligently to these instructions, and to re-

ceive them gladly. It speaks out a Love to GOD when we are willing and very desirous to know his will : but there is little regard for God, where there is no desire to understand what he sayeth to us in and by his word. But though *the Priests lips should keep knowledge*, and that it is the peoples duty to *seek the Law at his Mouth*, yet this is not to render the private search and study of the *Scriptures* useless : Guides are ordained to be helps, but not to take away our own sight ; we may find them useful though we do not put out our eyes. As the *Noble Bereans* did, we should *search the Scriptures dayly whither these things we hear be true or not* ; And this is the more necessary, because we are forewarned of *false Prophets* : Every Spirit is not to be believed, none ought to be received with an *implicit Faith*, but only the Spirit of GOD : all other should be tryed before trusted. And it needs be no hard task to try the truth of Doctrines, if we lay aside prejudice, and search the *Scripture impartially* : A man by applying his eye narrowly, especially if he hath the advantage of a Rule, will soon discern whither a thing be straight or crooked ; and it is indeed no less easie to judge in matters necessarie to Salvation.



5thly, I cannot omit here what was Anciently & Universally used though now turned into desuetude among us; and it is the Solemn and explicate profession of the Christian Faith, by a rehearsal of some Summary thereof, as the Apostles or Nicene, or Athanasian Creed. The expresse declaration of our Faith is much both for our profite and the honour of GOD: It is for the honour of GOD that we believe in GOD, and in JESUS CHRIST, and give our assent to all the truths of the Gospel; *without this faith it is impossible to please GOD*, unless our worship be founded on the belief of these things, it is altogether unacceptable: And it is not only necessary to have this Faith alwayes in our hearts, but we must also sometimes openly testify it, by confessing the same with our mouths, as the Apostle tells us, Rom: 10. 9. Where he saith, *that if thou shalt confesse with thy mouth the LORD JESUS, and shalt believe in thine heart that GOD hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation.* This is also profitable for our selves, for these Creeds are the Badges of Christianity, which instruct us in our profession, and teach us how to answer every man who

*asketh a reason of the hope that is in us.* A frequent repetition of the Creed fixeth the great Articles of our Religion in our mind, brings them often to our remembrance, and serves to excite us to walk worthy of the Gospel. Persons of Honour are careful to behave suitably while they have the *signs* and *badges* of their Dignity and Quality upon them; and sure it could not but oblige and quicken us to study a Christian Behaviour, if we frequently made a serious and solemn profession of our Faith. Lastly, *the celebration of the LORDS Supper* should frequently accompany our other acts of publick worship; the *Apostles* with their *Converts* did this daily, as we read Acts 2. 42. 46. which practice continued long in the *Primitive Church*. St *Augustine* in one of his *Epistles* to *Janearius* says 'twas the custome to do so in many place

\*The Council of *Antioch* condemneth such as do not communicate when they come up to Church to hear, so do those *Canons* which carry the name of *Apostolical*. Thus it appears that the participation of the Lord's Supper, was look'd upon as a necessary part of Divine service, which could not be well omitted; and there can be no reason given, why the u

of this Sacrament (at least every LORDS Day) was left off, but the decay of Piety: The Zeal and Devotion of the *Apostolick Ages* wore out, and so men became careless of giving this expression thereof. Or out off a Superstitious regard to their chief Festivals, they would only communicate on these days, that they might seem to do them the greater honour. But as for the present custom of communicating only once or twice a year, it is so unaccountable and speaks out so little *true love to GOD*, and the *memory of our Saviour*, that *Calvin* had good reason to call it *Diabolicum inventum*, a meer device of Satans to stifle Piety, and to keep back Peoples endeavours after Godliness.

This is a piece of Worship peculiar to the Christian Religion, which our LORD hath expressly enjoined; It's a great testimony of our *Faith*, a solemn act of *Adoration* payed both to the Father and Son, and a visible commemoration of the *Mystery of the Cross*, which as *S. Paul* speaketh, is both *the Wisdom of GOD*, and *the Power of GOD*: In a word, the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, is the *Chief Rite* of our Religion, which in a manner comprehends all others parts thereof, and by the serious participation of this Sacrament we truly glorify GOD, and bring  
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good to our selves, for CHRIST hath ordained it to be *the instrument of our union with him, and the conveyance of the benefits of his death.* And therefore this Sacrament should be often administrate, and who would testifie their love to GOD, should as frequently partake thereof.

It is alledged against frequent communicating, *first*, that 'twould take away much of the esteem due to this *Sacrament.* But if this Reason were good, 'twould follow also that we should seldome *think on GOD, Pray, read the Scriptures, and perform other Acts of Religion.* It is no true esteem, which ariseth only from the consideration of the rarity of the thing; and certainly acquaintance with *Spiritual actions* & frequent exercising them, begets the highest esteem of them and delight in them: He Prays best and with most pleasure who *Prays oftneſt*, and so of other things. Another pretence is that if men *Communicate frequently*, they would not have leasure to prepare themselves: But this runs upon a mistake of the nature of the *Sacrament*, and of the preparation requisite thereto. A *Cessation* from sin is alwayes necessary, but not from our civil business, especially if we had any occasion of *Communicating.* He who firmly believes the

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*Gospel*, heartily repents of his sins, and is resolved to live according to the *Gospel*, is truly disposed for the *Sacrament* any day, and every day; and who is not thus disposed for the *Sacrament*, neither is he fit to pray, or to go about any other *Religious exercise*, and so is in a state of enmity with GOD. If a Person once understand the *Nature and Design of the Sacrament*, and daylie exercise himself in Prayer, as we have shewed in the former Section, if his Life be a continual walking with GOD, he is ever suitably prepar'd for it. And if we ought to be alwayes thus prepar'd, therefore the want of preparation will not excuse the Omission of this Duty, the Omission whereof doth of it self imply though People are loath to acknowledge it a renunciation of the *Christian Religion*.

Thus we have gone through the several parts of publick Worship, shewed the necessity of them, and let see the right manner of going about them. And by what account we have given, which certainly will hold true, it appears that the publick Worship in all Reformed Churches is Proper and Acceptable, so that none have any just Reason to withdraw from it, and who doe it are undoubtedly guilty of *Schisme*: 'tis true, in some Places perhaps (and particularly among our selves

selves) there would need some Rectification for the more Grave, Decent and Orderly performance of Divine service; but however neither we nor any other of our Protestant Brethren want any essential part of Worship, nor have we or they any thing disagreeable to GOD, or which destroyes the end of Worship, so that they are without all excuse who refuse to have Communion with this or any other Reform'd Church.

But as this must be acknowledg'd for all Reformed Churches, so the quite contrary is true of the Worship in the Church of Rome: For it neither answers the end, nor agrees to the right rules of GOD'S Worship; it is not, it cannot be acceptable to GOD, for it is full of Abominations.

For First, in generall the Popish Service is neither Spiritual nor Reasonable. Though we do not consider it in Retail but in Gross, it must be acknowledg'd an ignorant brutish service, a service which is not conform to the Scriptures, nor doth it tend to the Glory of GOD, or the Edification of Men, because it cannot be understood being performed in an unknown Tongue. As the Learned D. Taylor sayeth, we may as soon reconcile Adultery with the seventh Command, as the service in a Language which cannot be understood, with the 14. of the

first *Ep. to the Corinthians*; and if *publick Worship* need not be understood, neither needs it be pronounced at all; for if the *Priest speaks* not to let Men understand him, he needs not speak to inform *God*, and so a *Dumb Priest* is even as good as one whom the People doth not understand. This practice of the *Church of Rome* is both contrary to the practice of all the *World*, & is condemned by common Sense; so that the *Papists* in defending themselves use a deal of impertinent nonsense and vent intolerable absurdities which render *Religion* ridiculous, and destroy the very Nature and Design of it. What an Absurdity is it, to teach People to use Prayers only as Charms? To think *ignorant prating* as acceptable to *GOD*, as the *sincere desires of the Soul*? and that judgement and discretion are useless in *Religion*, though it be the great end of our *Creation*, and though for it especially we were endued with Reasonable Faculties? I shall conclude this point.

with what a late *Popish Writer* hath *Moyens* confessed, *It is necessary to have the publick service in the common language of the Country*; for it is certain that this is agreeable to the Holy Scripture. The *Mysteries of GOD* are not as those of *Pagans*; these behoved to be hid from

People, because they were shameful and ridiculous, but GOD would have his Children instructed fully in his. There cannot be greater reproach thrown upon Religion, then to say as some do, that Faith without Knowledge is best. He must be an Impostour and Seducer who speaketh so, for St. Paul commands nothing more then that we should encrease in knowledge; The reading of the Holy Scripture should be recommended to People according to the practice of all the Fathers, It was not the People who wrested the Scripture, and spread Heresies; they were the Bishops and Doctors and Persons of the Clergy. Arrius, Macedonius, Nestorius, Eutyches, Pelagius, were all Church men.

2ly. The Worship of the Roman Church has not a Resemblance to the Christian Religion, because it wants the purity and simplicity thereof to make Worship look like Christian, as we formerly shewed, it should be Plain and Simple, that is, free of Ceremonies, except what are requisite to Excite and Fix the attention, & should chiefly consist of Actions, which are Grave and Serious, and which do properly expresse the Divine Majesty and Glory: But the Worship of the Papists is meerly Pomp & Pageantry, a vain external Shew of Ceremonies, fitter for the Theatre then the Church. Their Churches are dressed with Gaudy Scenes like Play-Houses, and like them



too they use not the light of the *Sun*, but the dazling & deceiving light of *Lamps and Wax-Candles*; their *Priests* are sumptuously decked with various kinds of Garments, and as for the *Service* it self, it consists in sprinkling of *holy water*, kindling *Perfumes*, *Kneeling*, and *bowing* and often crossing, Turning to the Right or Left Hand, according to the Sign given, the Elevating and Lowing of the Voice at certain Times, the vain repetition of unintelligible Words, and in a multitude of impertinent and insignificant Ceremonies which chock the very Spirit of Religion, and which would render what is read or spoken to no purpose though it could be understood: For 'tis impossible that the mind can be attentive or make any Serious application, where there is such a multitude of external performances. The *Worship* enjoyn'd and practis'd in the *Church of Rome* has more resemblance to *Paganisme* then the *Christian Religion*; it contains indeed Acts and instances of the true *Worship of GOD*, but is buried in *Heathnish Superstition* that they lose their *Efficacy*, both with *GOD and Man*. Their *Sprinklings*, *Processions*, *Scourgings*, *Pilgrimages*, and in a word, the most of their Ceremonies both in their Ordinary and Extraordinary Devotions are derived from ancient

*Paganisme*, and are indeed more suited to *Pagan tempers* then *Christian minds*; for such as understand the *Gospel* know that *GOD* taketh no pleasure in such *Actions*. *The hour cometh* saith *Christ*, and now is that the true *Worshippers* of *GOD*, shall *Worship Him* in *Spirit* and in *Truth*, for the *Father* seeketh such to *Worship Him*.

3ly *Popish worship* is not only full of *Superstition* but *Idolatry*, it not only is made up of many foolishly and uselesse *Actions*, which can pretend to no *Shadow* of *Reason* or *Divine Authority*: But it contains also many things expressly forbidden, as the *Invocation* and *Adoration* of *Angels*, and *Saints*, &c. What *St. Paul* said of *Rome Pagan*, holds true of *Rome Christian*, they have changed the true of *GOD* into a lie, and *Worship* the creature more then the *Creator*. For the most of their *Worship* is not tendered to *GOD* and *JESU CHRIST*, but to *Angels*, the blessed *Virgin* and other departed *Saints*, to *Images*, *Reliques* that is, the *Bones*, *Ashes* and other forged appurtenances of their supposed *Saints*, I say supposed, for their is no evidence for the most of them but the *Popes Canonization* which is very insufficient: 'Tis knowne the name of one *Pope Gregory*, that should have said, *multorum corpora veneran*

*in terris, quorum anime cruciantur in infernis*, that is, many are *Worshipped as Saints*, who are *damned in Hell*. The *Papists* in their *publick Worship* are required to *adore Bread as GOD*, to *Pray to the Dead*, and *for the Dead*, and to do several other things which not only have no warrant in *Scripture*, but are quite contrary thereto, and therefore *GOD* can be pleased neither with such a worship, nor those who offer it, more then he was with the *Nations* whom the *King of Assyria* planted in *Samaria*, of whom it is said, *that they feared the LORD, and served other Gods besides*.

4ly. The *Mass* which is the chiefest part of their *Worship*, is the highest abomination: For it is used in stead of the *Holy Sacrament* which our *LORD* instituted that night wherein he was betrayed, but in *Trnth*, it is quite another thing, because they have added to it and pared from it, and use it in another sense and to other purposes, then what that *Sacrament* was design'd for. First, they withhold the *Cup*, which is the one half of the *Sacrament*, though it be clear that our *Saviour* commanded *All* to drink of it, as both the *Councill of Constance*, and *Trent*, acknowledge in their *Acts* which prohibite the use of the *Cup* to the *Laity*. And as for the other part of the *Sacrament*, besides that their *Wafers* cannot be

be counted Bread, they do not use the *rite of breaking it*, which is so essential that this *Sacrament* is ordinarily *denominat* by it in *Scripture*. Indeed what the *Priest* takes to himself, he breaks in three pieces, one whereof is cast into the *Cup*, another is left upon the *Altar*, until the end of the *Service*, and the third he puts in his own *Mouth*: but this doth not answer to *that breaking* which our LORD used, and which is necessary to hold Forth the purport of the *Sacrament*. That this Action may be agreeable to our LORD'S *institution*, it is necessary that all the *Communicants* eat and have distribute to them *one broken Bread*. 2ly. Our LORD ordain'd the Bread in this *Sacrament* to be only a *symbol of his Body*, but they give it out to be *His very self*, and command *Divine Adoration* to be payed thereto, which is the greatest absurdity and the grossest *Idolatry* imaginable, as we have formerly made out. 3ly. Our LORD designed this *Sacrament* to be only a *memorial of his Death*, and of that *satisfaction was given thereby to the Justice of GOD for the sins of men*: but they teach and command under pain of damnation to be believed, that in the *Trid. sess. Masse* there is a *real propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead*, because according to them, *Jesus*



*Christ* is dayly Sacrificed and Offered therein: Which Doctrine contains a heap of Absurdities, and makes their *Maß* a Blaspheinous action and most injurious to the *Sacrifice of the Cross*. For hereby it would follow that *Christ* was Sacrificed before he was Crucified, viz. when he instituted this Sacrament; that his Death was no sufficient Attonement there being such necessity for repeating it so frequently; and that *St. Paul* erred grossely in thinking it absurd that he should offer himself often, in saying, he was but once offered to bear the sins of many; and in preferring that one Oblation of *JESUS CHRIST* upon the Cross to all the legal Sacrifices, because they behoved to be offered year by year continually to shew their insufficiency; whereas he by one offering, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, see *Heb. 9. 25. 28. 10. 1. &c.* farther from the *Papists* Doctrine of the Sacrifice of the *Maß*, it follows that our *LORD'S* Priest hood is not Eternal, or peculiar to himself as the Scripture teacheth, particularly *Heb. 7.* Seing many succeed him in the Office. Nay it may be inferred by good consequence, that Men are preferable to *JESUS CHRIST* Himself, for the Priest is alwayes preferable to the Sacrifice; and therefore if their Priests are impowred to offer up

*Jesus*

*Jesus Christ* they must be esteem'd better *then* *he*. None was worthy to offer *that sacrifice which taketh away sin*, but such an *high Priest* as was *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher then the Heavens*, Heb: 7. 26. Wherefore as none could be the *sacrifice* but *JESUS*, so none other could be the *Priest* to offer that *Sacrifice*, both the *Sacrifice* and *Priest* are one, which makes the *Opinions* of the *Papists* concerning a *sacrifice* of the *Mass* impious and blasphemous. It would require a particular *Treatise*, to set forth the corruptions of the *Church of Rome* in this part of their *Worship*, as the *Priest partaking alone*, the offering it for such are dead, the celebrating it in honour of *Saints*, &c. And therefore if there were no more but this alone, twere too much to make *People* leave the *communion* of that *Church*. But,

Lastly, besides these *Impieties* mentioned, whereof every one is actually guilty who joine in the *Worship of the Church of Rome*, there be a great many other errors, abuses, and corruptions taught and practised in that *Church*, which all they who keep her *Communion* must necessarily be reckoned guilty of: For as joyning in *Worship* is a sign of holding *Communion*, so thereby persons testify their belief of, and assent to all which  
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that Church with whom they hold Communion teacheth and practiseth as necessary to *Salvation*. Now seeing the *Church of Rome* requireth all under pain of damnation to believe the *infallibility of their Church*, the *Supremacy of the Pope*, *Purgatory*, *Auricular Confession*, *Pennances*, *Indulgences*, the *Insufficiency of Scripture*, the *equal Authority of Unwritten Traditions*, the *unlawfulness of Clergy Mens Marrying*, the *necessity of observing Dayes*, *Meats*, &c. Without particular dispensations from the Pope, who arrogates to himself a power of rescinding both *Humane and Divine Laws*, these and many more Falseshoods and Absurdities are enjoined by the *Roman Church* as *Articles of Faith*, and as *necessary to Salvation*, and therefore who keep communion with her, do *ipso facto* approve of all her Errours and Abominations, and must be thought to exclude from *Salvation* those who refuse to submit thereto, for she doth so. It will not availe any to say, that in their *Private judgement* they are otherwise perswaded, neither have made any expresse Verbal Acknowledgement to the contrary, seeing they do that which necessarily import the same. Men give their assent by their Actions as well as by their Words; and what we cannot approve in our Hearts, we ought not to approve by

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our Profession or Practice. Hypocrisy in Religion is damnable, and they are Hypocrites who professe what they do not beleive: The belief of the Heart and confession with the mouth should not be disjoined, neither ought we by our Actions to countenance what we judge false and abominable. This I thought fit to say, because it is a trick used to gain persons to the *Roman Communion*, if otherwise they cannot be induced, to pass them a formal abjuration of the *Protestant Doctrine*, or an expresse consent to all the Tenets of that *Church*: But such would do well to remember and consider, that they do the one and the other, really and upon the matter as much as if they gave more expresse Declarations. I shall conclude with these words of *Scripture* which certainly are as applicable to the *Church of Rome*, as ever they were or will be to any. *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the LORD Almighty; 2 Cor: 6. 17, 18. And again, Come out of her my People, that ye be not partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues: For her sins have reached unto Heaven, and GOD hath remembered her Iniquities; Rev: 18. 4. 5.*



## C H A P. I V.

*Of the last Words of JACOB'S Vow, The Question about the Churches Right to Tithes wav- ed, but the taking them away is shew'd to be Sacrilege. Every Particular Person ow- eth to GOD a part of his Estate; The Propor- tion considered, and some Motives pressing Charity, and Alm's-Giving, are propos'd.*

**T**HAT GOD is to be *Worshipped and Adored*, that there should be *Endea- vours to please Him*, will be readily acknowledged by All: This is the very *Dictate of Natural Conscience*, and who have no *Sense* thereof, nor own any *Obligation* there- to, must needs be very *Profligate and De- bauched*. And though it cannot be denyed, but that there are such *Monsters of Wicked- ness* who have no *Fear of GOD before their eyes*, yet it must be confessed also, that the *Generality of Mankind* as they *profess and believe in GOD*, so they seem to wish and be desirous of *His Favour and Good-wil*. It is not then *gross Atheism and Infidelity* which damnes and undoes the greatest part of the World: but the *Rock upon which Men split most is Hypocrisie*,  
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and the want of *sincerity in serving GOD*. They would please him, and are content to do something in order to it, but yet have not a Heart to ply all that is requisite: thus they will observe the *smaller and lesser* part of the Law, but in the meantime slip over what is more Weighty and of Greater Moment; they are very ready and willing to pay that Service which is cheap and easie, and which puts them neither to great pains, nor much cost, but what imports and includes either they are averse to and shrink from. Some will be very *Religious* whilst it is counted Religion to bear the Word of GOD, to read it and talk of it, to pray and to frequent the outward Ordinances of the Gospel, but when they are told of denying themselves, of taking up the Cross, of Mortifying the body, Subduing lust, Bridling their passions, and particularly, of distributing their goods to the poor, then they discover the Naughtiness & Hollowness of their Heart, how much they mock GOD and deceive themselves: for they look upon these as hard sayings, and cannot digest them, but with the Young Man in the Gospel, they turn away sad and sorrowful. Such will seem sometimes to contend earnestly for Heaven, but yet they keep a fast hold of the Earth; they seem very zealous for the service of GOD so long as it costs

costs them nothing, but when Chargeable & Expensive Duties are required, then they find out many Shifts & Excuses, they either pretend the non-necessity of them, or their own inability; and when none of these can be pretended, they still delay and put off till another time, and 'tis very long before they can be drawn to the Performance; & some never think it time to bequeath any of their Goods to Pious and Charitable uses till Death, that 'tis impossible for them to hold them any longer.

This Pievish and niggardly disposition towards the *Service of GOD* is very far contrary to what the holy *Patriarch Jacob* sheweth here, where we see that as he devoted himself to GOD, so heartily and freely the Tenth of all that he possessed, By giving this portion to GOD, we are to understand the allotting and Setling a part the same for such Ends and Uses as tendeth to the *Honour and Glory of GOD*, such as to the maintenance of his House, and his service therein, and to the relief of the Poor and Indigent, for whatsoever is imployed this way, is given unto GOD: We cannot reach himself immediatly with our Presents & Gifts, nor stands he in any need of them, but the LORD is pleased to take that as done to himself, which  
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is done for the publick good of Mankind, particularly for the relief and comfort of such as are in Poverty and Distress: Verily I say unto you, saith our Saviour, in as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me; Mat: 25. 40.

I doubt not but upon the first view of the title of this Book, it will be apprehended that we intend to assert the *Churches Right to the Tithes*, but as this is a *Doctrine* which few are disposed to hear, so the entering upon this Question would but oblige us to enlarge this Treatise beyond what we design'd it, and seeing a discourse of this head is fitter to be addressed to *Publick States*, than to *private & particular persons*, for whose use only we have intended this, therefore we resolve not to meddle with this Question. However by the by, we cannot but say, that whatever may be pretended by the *Law of Nature*, or the *Written Law of GOD*, it is certain that our *Tithes* were *Sacred and Consecrate things*, by the *Donation and Charity of Men*; and therefore ought never to have been alienated to any profane use. 'Tis true indeed they were most vilely abused by such as possessed them, but their abuse of them did not, neither could annul and cut off GOD'S right unto them. The abuse might have been rectified



rectified without taking away the use of the things themselves, and certainly the *Sacrilegious robbing of GOD* of what was so Solemnly and for so many Years Devoted unto him, is such a stain upon our Reformation, as that our *Orthodox Faith* and the soundness of our Judgements, in other Particulars Will never attone or sufficiently wipe away; these words of *St. Paul*, seem to touch us very nearly, *thou that abboressts Idols, dost thou commit Sacriledge, Rom: 2: 22:* The *brasen Censers* which *Corah* and his *complices* made use of; though their use of them was not only unwarrantable, but even contrary to the *expresse command of GOD*, yet the LORD would not suffer them to be cast away, or to be turned unto any other use than that of the *Sanctuary*, but commanded to make of them *Broade plates* for a covering of the Altar: For, saith he, *they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed; Numb. 16. 38.* So notwithstanding the great abuse of those things which the Church possessed in the times of *Poperie*, yet being they were once dedicated unto the Lord, therefore they ought never to have been imployed to other than *Sacred uses*. I say, *sacred uses*, and not the *Ministers of the Gospel* only, for I confels the appropriating all that *Wealth* to the present small  
number

number of the Clergy , and to their particular use  
allennarly , were neither Reasonable nor  
Convenient: But as this Kingdom would re-  
quire a greater number to serve in the *Mini-*  
*stry* , so it would be fit and proper to bestow  
a better Maintenance upon some then what  
they enjoy. People testifie their respect to  
GOD, when they Honour His *Servants*, in  
allowing them a Liberal Maintenance , and  
indeed as a liberal Share is first due to the  
*Ministers of the Gospel* , and such as *official a-*  
*bout Holy Things* ; so this might have been  
given out of what the *Church* formerly pos-  
sessed , and enough besides for other *pious*  
*uses*. Out of what remained, *Hospitals* might  
have been maintained for *Sick and Diseased*  
*Persons* , and for a Refuge for such as were  
decayed through Age or other Infirmitie,  
and thereby rendred unable for any Calling  
or Office , there might have been an Al-  
lowance for Widows and Orphans, and the  
training up Children in Lawful Trades,  
and some Charitable Banks erected for lend-  
ing Supplies to such , as were broken in  
their Fortunes, whereby they might Recruite  
themselves, and be enabled to set up again.  
I am confident the former *Church Revenues*,  
and *consecrated Lands* would have been almost  
sufficient for these things, and this use there-  
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of will I think be acknowledged more for the *publick good* then what they were imployed unto : And as this would have made less complaining in our Streets, so it would, been more for the *Honour of our Reformation*, and would have stoped the mouthes of our *Adversaries* , whereas now they Cry out, *that the Zeal for the Reformation was not Sincere*, but that there was more regard to the *spoiles of the Church* , then to the taking away the *corruptions thereof* ; for which the Pious Mr. Mede, and some others , are very confident, *GOD will some time or other signifie his displeasure by some signal judgement*, and indeed *Sacrilege* seldom or never passed unpunished. But enough of this.

What we intend at present is , First , to shew that every *Particular Person* owes to *GOD* a part of his *Estate and Fortune* , and that *GOD* doth require and expect it from him. 2ly we shall consider what *Proportion or Quality* every one should think themselves oblidge to give. And *Thirdly* , we shall propose some *Motives* for pressing home, and stirring up to the *Practice* of this necessary, but I suppose much neglected Duty.

As to the *First* , that every one owes a part of his *estate and fortune* , to be thus imployed in the exercise of *Charity towards Men*, is a thing  
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which will easily appear by the Laws of Justice and Gratitude; *for all that we have is from GOD*, what ever we possess comes from His Bounty, and is the effects of his Goodness, by whatsoever Means and Methods it hath come unto us. Was thy inheritance instail'd upon the *Bybirth*, thou art nevertheless oblig'd to GOD allennerly for it, for it was his Providence who Ordered thee to be born in Lawful *Wedlock* of such Rich and Wealthy Parents, it was he alone that cared thus for thee before thou hadst a being, and before thou could'st make any choice for thy self. Is all the Fruit of thy Labour and industry? Though it be so, yet it doth not lessen thy Obligation to GOD, for he gave thee, the Wit and the Head by which thou hast contriv'd, and the hands by which thou hast wrought and laboured; and his Wisdom did appoint and find out all those *Favourable Circumstances* which have been the occasion of thy Prosperity and success; and it is his Providence alone which hath prevented thole many Casualties, which might have devested thee of all, so that if it had not been for Him, thou mightest long agoe been stript naked and reduced to a piece of Bread. How many have gon to Bed rich and wealthy and have awakne



poor and Miserable ? have we not seen persons turned out of their possessions, and rob'd of all their Wealth; and who have not been so dealt with must ascribe it to the Goodness and Care of GOD toward them. Certainly what ever Wealth or Riches, Honour or Advantages any man enjoyeth, is still to be considered as the Gift and Gratiuity of *Almighty GOD*, as *Jacob* doth here : For he saith not, *all that I have, or shall have, but all that thou shalt give me*; Acknowledging thereby that whatsoever should accrew to him by whatsoever means would be nevertheless GOD'S doings. But when I say by *whatsoever means*, it is still to be understood of lawfull means, for what cometh by unlawfull wayes, as by fraud and violence &c. Is not from GOD, but from him who promised to our Saviour *All the Kingdoms of the World if he would fall down and Worship him*: And though a man should give all this to the Poor, and in Charitable uses, it would not be accepted, it would be but an abomination.

But to return, if all be owing to the *Divine bountie*, it is just and reasonable, and our bound Duty to allot and consecrate a part to his Glory. We are unworthy receivers of his Benefits if we do not thanfully acknow-

Portion without learning it by Divine revelation. In the law of *Moses* the *Tithes* of all things are expressly Commanded to be payed as an acknowledgment of GOD'S being the Proprietar of the whole Earth, and that men hold their possessions only by his bounty and good will therefore *Deut: 26*. As there is a Command for paying *Tithes*, and bringing the *First Fruits* as an offering unto the house of the LORD, so there is set down the particular confession to be made at these Offerings in which is shewed the reason for requiring them *viz*: That even GOD'S *Tittle* to the whole land might be acknowledged, and that he might thereby be moved to bless the possession thereof to them, seeing that they thus own him to be their LORD and GOD. Now as for the *Gospel*, this *Precept* is not renewed in it; and the Ceremonies of *Bringing up to the house of GOD, the first Fruits of our encrease and what is due out of our Substance*, doth not much concern us: But though the *Ceremonial part* of this *Precept* be not now obligatorie, yet the *Moral* thereof is; for CHRIST hath not taken away our Obligation to these *moral observances*, which the Honour of GOD calls for, *think not*; saith he, *that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I am not come to*  
*destro<sup>e</sup>*

destroy, but to fulfil; *Matth. 5. 17.* There is not indeed in the *New Testament* such frequent and particular mention of making these offerings by way of Tribute unto GOD, because there we are not considered as in a *Servile State*, by the *Gospel* GOD hath exalted us to the *Nobler State of Friends and Children*, and deals with us as such, which yet doth not take away our obligation from paying necessary Duties, whereof the thing we are now speaking about is one. And though as we have said the *Devoting some portion of our Goods*, be not now called so by way of Tribute as from *Servants or Subjects*, yet the thing it self is very often injoynd and inculcated, viz. of *Almes giving*, *Beneficencie*, and *Works of Charity & Mercie*, & though the phrase of giving Almes be generally used, yet it is so spoken of, as to let us understand that it is a debt due unto GOD which we are unjust if we do not pay: for it is usually Styled *Justice or Righteousness*, as *Mat. 25.*

We must not think that GOD hath now under the *Gospel* quit his *Right and Tittle* to our Goods and Possessions, or that he doth not require any acknowledgment of them from us; we are much mistaken if we think so, He requires this now as much as ever; and therefore to this end it is, that his

his Providence continues to Poor and Distressed persons in the World, and other occasions of doing good. Ye have; saith our Saviour, the Poor alwayes with you; Mat: 26. 11. Which is the repetition of a Promise made Deut: 15. 11. Where it is said *The Poor shall never cease out of the land, therefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy Poor, and thy Needy, in thy land.* The Poor and Distressed are GOD'S Assignes, to them he hath assigned the Debts we owe Him; or we may look upon them as his Chamberlaines whom he hath appointed to take up his Rents; by them he doth as 'twere Draw Bills upon us for what is due to himself, and when they aske us in GOD'S Name, 'tis no Forgery, they have GOD'S Warrant and Commission for it: Wherefore as the Wise man teacheth, *with hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.* Prov: 3: 27. *Thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy Poor Brother saith the LORD, but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shall surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wanteth.* Deut: 15. 7. The Poor and Needy are GOD'S Altars, whereon we must offer Sacrifice; and seing he hath broken down these other Altars of stone which were



were *under the Law*, and hath freed us from the burden of these many *expensive Sacrifices* which were then required, we should not take in our hand, nor be sparing in the *works of Charity and Mercy*, but should look upon our selves as oblig'd in all justice and Gratitude to abound in them the more Liberally. GOD hath not abrogat *Sacrifices* and *Oblations* altogether, but only chang'd the use of them, and the way and manner of offering them; he will have them offered upon *Living Altars*, for the greater Comfort and delight of the Sons of Men: and as by the *Law* many *Sacrifices* and *Offerings* were exacted of the *Worshippers*, so the Gospel now requires *Almes and charitable deeds* no lesse; and as under the *Law*, he who contemned *sacrifices*, and refused *oblations*, was not counted Religious towards GOD, but without all fear of Him; so now under the Gospel, they must be reckoned void of all *Piety and Devotion*. who do not express it by works of *Charity and Mercy* which are our *Spiritual Sacrifices* for St. James tells us, that *pure Religion and undefiled before GOD, and the Father is to visite the Fatherless, and Widows in their affliction, and to keep our selves unspotted from the World.* Jam. 1. 29.

Thus we have made out our obligation to devote some part of our Goods to GOD, that is to

*Works of Piety and Charity*, because it is expressly commanded. 'Tis both a *Sign* and an *Essential part of Religion*, and 'tis a necessary Act of *Homage* whereby we acknowledge GOD to be the *Soueraign of the World*, and the *true Owner of all our Possessions*. He therefore who gives nothing this way, transgresseth a *Divine command*, casts off the *Badge of Religion*, and is not only unjust to Men but to GOD; he rebelleth against the LORD of Heaven and Earth, in refusing to pay Tribute which is due, and whereby our Vassalage is signified.

It follows next, that we shew what *quantity or proportion of our state should be payed unto God*. It is ordinarily thought that Alms is an Arbitrary thing, left altogether to Peoples own Discretion; and that being their Goods are their own, they may give as much or as little as they please, without deserving any blame: But truly it's not so left to Peoples own Discretion; For he is as unjust both to GOD and Man, who gives nothing in Charity, so one may give and yet be nevertheless uncharitable, and consequently undutiful to GOD, because he gives not enough, not proportionally to his Estate, and that measure of Wealth which GOD hath bestowed on him. *Little will be accepted of, from him who*

*who hath little; but to whom much is given, of them much will be required, and to whom is committed much, of him the more will be asked, as it is Luke 12. 48. Our LORD indeed commended the poor Widow for casting in two mites into the Treasury of the Temple: But that will not justify the unworthy custome, which is now become very general, of throwing a Penny or Farthing or thereabouts to our offering when we come up to the House of GOD; nor because of this, have any reason to think they deserve Commendation, if they in any thing exceed the Widows alms, unless what they give, bear as great a proportion to their Fortune as her two mites did to hers. Now saith Christ, all these have of their abundance cast in unto the Offering of GOD, but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had, Luke 21. 4. Wherefore every one ought to give proportionally as God hath blessed him, and when a Mans Alms or Charity beareth no proportion to his Means and Estate, he may deservedly be charged with Ingratitude to God, and a Defrauding him of his Dues, even as he is unjust who payeth not the just reddenda of his Charters, and the real Take-duty of the Lands he possesseth.*

Now in finding out the *true proportion of our Alms and Charity*, as we must consider

our own Ability and *God's bounty* towards us, so we must distinguish between ordinary and extraordinary Occasions: for neither can all Men give alike, nor is any obliged to the same measure at all times. Men are bound to be more Liberal and Charitable in times of great Dearth, Famine and Scarcity, when many People are ready to perish for want at such Occasions, there is no other set rule but the necessities of People, which every one who hath must be careful to administer unto. Then these Precepts, *Go sell all that thou hast, and give unto the poor. Let him that hath two Coats give to him that hath none, and let him that hath bread do so likewise,* these I say must be obeyed even to the very strictness of the Letter: For we are but stewards of the good things which we receive and must disburse them out again when God calls for them; as certainly he doth on all such Occasions, when it is not possible otherwise to keep People from Starving. As Stewards we ought first to serve our selves and then to distribute to the rest of the Family; but he is an unjust Steward, who letteth any want or perish for hunger, if he hath beside him wherewith to supply them. Hence 'twas that the Disciples and the first Converts to Christianity, did sell their whol

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possessions and gave them to the *Treasury of the poor*: they had all things then in common, and it is *St. Pauls* advice to the *Corinthians*, that every man lay by in store what God hath prospered him, viz. For the poor, 1 Cor. 16. 2. which rule and practice is not alwayes binding, nor are any now tyed to follow the same unless we were in the same circumstances.

But leaving what is extraordinary, we will speak to that which men are oblidg'd to, even when there is no such great or universal Calamity: As in times of Dearth and Famine all must be given, if it be necessary; so even at other times, we must be caretull to devote something to God, and the use of his poor *Servants*. That proportion which *Jacob* vowed here, was the practice of all the Patriarchs and *Servants of God* before the Law: When the Law was given by *Moses*, God required the first fruits of all things, and one *Tithe* for the use of the *Priests and Levites*; he commanded also another *Tithe* every third year for the use of the poor *Deut.* 14. 28. The first *Tithe* was *Debitum fundi*, the tribute upon the Land, and may be called *GOD'S ground-rent*, or *Few duty* which the very Land owed to him: The other *Tithe* was *Debitum Personæ*, which every  
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one owed out of his own property, thereby to make an acknowledgment of God's Favour and kindness to him, in allowing him Possessions while others wanted.

But besides this *Triennial Tithe*, they were ordained every year *to leave the corners of their field at Harvest*, & were forbidden either to reap the rest of their field clean, or to gather all the fruit of their Vine yards, but to leave in them for the poor, *Lev. 19. 9.* And moreover every *seventh year*, the poor and Stranger had the whole profite of all the land. see, *Exod. 23. 11.* All which reckoned together, the *Jews* besides the *Tithes* to the *Priests* & other Publick Dues, will be found to have payed more then the tenth of their *yearly incomes* for the use of the poor only. Which proportion, though it be not exacted by any expresse positive Law repeated in the *Gospel*, yet all Good and Holy Persons have ever look'd upon themselves as oblig'd to it in strict Justice, seeing the *Jews* were tyed to it. Some offered to prove *Tithes* due to GOD from the *Law of Nature*, but I could never see any forcible argument why either the *tenth* of our Estate, or the *seventh* of our time should be allotted and condescended on if we abstract from *Divine Revelation*, and the expresse Command of GOD: certainly as  
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one concerning the proportion of our time to the other which measures the quantity of our Goods and Estate, hath been fallen upon by the particular direction of GOD himself. And therefore seeing the *Worshippers of GOD* under the *Old Testament* were oblig'd to give the *tenth* of all they possessed, I cannot understand how any can be satisfyed with giving lesse under the *New Testament*. Our Righteousness must not come short of those under the *Law*, I say unto you, saith *CHRIST*, that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; *Mat. 5. 10.* If therefore they gave the *tenth*, sure we can do no less. This is no part of the *Ceremonial Law* abrogated by the *Gospel*, for as the Devoting something is clear by *Natural Light*, so this *quotum* we see was enjoyned before the *Law*; and there is so little reason for mincing it now, that there is much Reason rather to Augment it, for we live under a clearer light, have received greater manifestations of *GOD'S Love* and better promises, that is, Promises wherein a future happy Life is more plainly exprest. We pay 6 of the hundred for the use of Money, and sometimes more for the exchange of it, now the *tenth* is but four more, and shall we grudge to give this to  
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GOD for the property, when we are oblig'd to give the other to men for the simple loan and use. Sure none will refuse this, or think it too much after they have seriously considered the matter, but such as are too much oblig'd to the World, and are but too little sensible of their obligations to Love and Honour GOD. How small a matter is an 100 *Merks* to him whom GOD hath Blessed with a 1000 free of yearly Rent? He who hath much over and above the Payment of Publick and Particular Burdens, may very well let one go to the poor in Testimony of his *Thankfulness to GOD who giveth all Liberally.* But would to GOD! That Men in his *Degenerate Age* could be prevailed on to give the *fifteenth or sixteenth part* of their yearly gain and incomes, which is but the proportion of the *Ordinary annual-rent of Money* in this *Countrey*: & unless they be resolved to haulke this *Duty of Charity* altogether I cannot understand how they can satisfy their Consciences with lesse then this comes to; if they will not be convinc'd of their Obligation to pay the *tenth*, yet I hope at least they will acknowledge themselves bound to be as *Thankful to GOD as to Man*, and to return him as much for the Property as they give to, and exact of others for the Loan and use. If one



one were borrowing a 1000 Merks, he would give *Fourty Pounds* in the year for it; now he who hath a *Thousand merks per annum free*, I think should be ashamed to offer less then *fourty pounds* to God, or indeed to give so little.

I suppose my Reader before this time is convinc'd of the necessity of Obeying and Honouring GOD, and that the *Communicating a part of our goods for the use of the Poor, &c.* Is one instance of our Obedience, and one necessary way of Honouring him: Now he who is thus convinc'd, may be easily perswaded of his Obligations not to reckon with God too narrowly or particularly; but that he ought to be as free and Liberal in the Expressions of his *Thankfulness* as GOD is to him in the effects of his Bounty. Every one hath more then he deserves, and the rich have more then they can lawfully ask, for *Daylie Bread* is all we are allowed to Pray for, and considering what Sinners we are, t'is more then we are worthy of, and therefore when GOD hears our *Lawful Desires*, yea gives beyond them, I think common Equity should teach us to deall with him in like manner, and to give back more, at least as much as he seeks from us, that is, I think we should not hesitate at the *Tenth*, but give even over and above,

if our *Circumstances* will allow it: If we think the quantity of our Charity be wholly left to our own Discretion, then should not the Rules of Discretion teach us to give rather more then what would be sought? Now the *tenth* was required before the *Law* and under the *Law*, and there can be no Reason pretended why it should be abated under the *Gospel*.

Let me therefore entreat all who would keep a Conscience void of offence in this particular, to consider how GOD hath Blessed them, what is their yearly Rent, Gain, or Income to give GOD *His due* out of the same freely and Chearfully. And whatsoever they purpose in their Heart to give, I would advise them to set it a part by it self, to separate it from what is reserved to their own use, for hereby several Advantages would arise. *First*, They shall be sure to make no encroachment on what they *Devote to GOD*, which would be no lesse then the *Heinous sin of Sacriledge*. *2ly*. They should hereby give more Readily and Chearfully, because they have so much by them, for no other use then to be given. *3ly*. This would make them seek out occasions of bestowing Charity, and not wait until Occasions present themselves which is an Ordinary fault, and the

the Reason why this Duty is so seldome performed ; who devotes a certain part of their Goods and estate to GOD , should do as Men use when they have Mony of a Friend, even seek out Good hands to lay it in.

Perhaps 'twill be best to pay this Debt to GOD in *Parcels* as our gain and Advantages come in ; for as hereby we shall best know whither we doe justly agreeable to our vow or purpose, so 'twill be more convenient, & a lesse Tentation to grudging, then if all were payed together. And besides what we think fit thus to *Consecrate to GOD* , for his *Ordinary constant Kindness to us* , 'twill be proper to enlarge our hand on special Occasions , as upon the receipt of some *particular Mercy* , - or in time of Sicknes or other Affliction , that we may give a Testimony of joy and thankfulness for the first , and secure some *Special comfort* to our selves in the last case.

Some it may be will imagine that all this doth only concern the Rich and Wealthy, but let none be so mistaken. These indeed are especially Oblidged to give Almes, or rather they are Oblidged to large and *Liberal Measures* : But others are not exeemed from *Works* of Charity, this is a Duty incumbent on all. Who have Much , must give Much , who have much of this Worlds  
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Goods and Little to do with them, are obliged to bestow more this way then those of equal Fortune, but who have more to do with it, as having more Children, or being Oblidg'd to keep a greater retinue: but even all who are not themselves objects of Charity are obliged to contribute something to the relief of the Poor and indigent thereby to testify their Homage to, and Dependence upon God; and if Persons be willing, they easily may render themselves able to do either more or less. They who live on their proper industry, and have nothing but as they earn it, may lay by a dayes or halt dayes work in the Week, & Servants who work to others may give a part of their Wages, or one or two Meals a week; and if every one study to enable themselves, and give according to their Ability, though it be little 'twill be as acceptable as the gifts of the Rich. I never saw the meaner sort of People, even such as seem scarce to have their necessaries, but they would find out some shift for Money when they had a Friends or Neighbours Marriage to go to, and sure if they were as intent upon *Charitable Deeds*, they might take the same course to enable them thereto. The want of ability therefore proceeds too often from the

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want of will, 'tis because we think not our selves Oblidged to doe Good, or that 'tis enough if we do any though never so little: but we should consider that we ought to lay our selves out to this, we should be industrious in this matter, and ought to endeavor as much to be Rich in *good Works*, as to be Rich in *Worldly goods*; nay the main Reason why we should Labour to be rich towards the World, is that we may be *Rich towards GOD*, and that we may have to give to them that need.

Which leads me to the *Third* and *Last* thing proposed, viz: to give some Motives to Perswade and Excite to the Exercise of this *Duty of Charity*.

And *First*, we shall begin with what indeed should be the *Chief end* of such *good works*, and *alms-deeds*, and the *Principle* from which they should flow, viz: The *Love of GOD* and *desire of pleasing him*. Though one would give never so much this way, even all his goodsto feed the Poor, if 'twere not out of *Love to GOD*, 'twould profite nothing, he would neither find Acceptance nor Reward: But as what we do of this kind should be out of *Love to GOD*, so if we have any *Sincere Love* to him, any true Regard for him, any *Hearty desire* to insinuate our selves

selves in his Favour, we cannot but be forward to, and much set upon the works of *Charity and Mercy*: Because he Delights in these things, is well pleased with them, and truly oblinded by them. *To doe good and to communicate forget not, saith St. Paul, for with such sacrifices GOD is well pleased, Heb: 13. 16.* And writing to the *Philippians* of the supply they sent him, he tells them *'twas an odour of Sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to GOD. Phil: 4. 18.* I shall not offer to shew how much we ought to *Love GOD*, or how much it is our interest to *seek his Favour*, for who will not acknowledge it? But certainly if we have any *love to him* for the many *Blessings Spiritual & Temporal* bestowed on us, or be desirous to secure his Kindness for the time to come; we will exercise our selves in acts of *Charity*, seeing they are so acceptable to him. Every good and *Charitable deed* gratifies *GOD*, and endears us to him; hereby we both requite his *past Favour*, and also secure his *future love*. O how fond are People of Occasions of oblidging Kings, Princes, and other great Persons? How much will they stretch themselves even beyond their Power, to get rare and acceptable presents to offer them? with what joy will they receive them into their houses, if they

they have the least hope thereby to make Court, and to obtain acts of Grace from them? But O how small a happiness is this? And how contemptible in Comparison of that which ariseth from occasions of *Gratifying* GOD, for his court is not unstable like Earthly Courts, his Favour is a certain thing, and attended with many more desirable Blessings. Now all the occasions of doing good, are as many occasions of *Gratifying and obliging* GOD; he who is capable of giving *Charity* is capable of *befriending* GOD, and of engaging his Love; to feed the hungry, to cloath the naked, to loose the prisoner, and to doe other acts of charity, is to entertain GOD himself: For in as much, saith CHRIST, as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it to me. Mat: 25. 40. And seeing GOD thus presents himself to us in the persons of the Poor, we may very well say with St. Iohn, *Who so hath this Worlds goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of GOD in him?* 1. Iohn. 3. 17.

Secondly. It is a generous and praise-worthy thing to be *Charitable*. To be set upon doing good is both lovely in it self, and in the eyes of all the World; this gains the hearts

Hearts, and wins the Affections of all. Wit, Learning, Dexterity, and Courage will be talk'd of indeed with some Admiration, but *Bounty* and *Charity* is truly lov'd and Esteem'd; instances of these do tickle the Fancy chiefly, but this really affects the Hearts of all who know it. Every ones heart is open to embrace him whose hands are alwayes ready to the releif of the Poor and Miserable every Mouth blesteth him, and every tongue speaks of his Praise; People honour his Presence, Pray for his Life, and count it a Blessing, and when he is gone hence his memory is dear to them: Such an one needs no Brass Statue, or Marble Tomb to perpetuate his Name, it never rots, but lasteth to many Generations, and like precious Ointment has still a *sweet Savour*, which refresheth the *Spirits* of those who smell it. The *Righteous* saith the *Psalmist* (that is the *Charitable Man*, as appears from the context) *shall be in everlasting remembrance.* Ps. 112. 6 And how can it be otherwise? for

Thirdly, *Charity* is a *God-like thing*, it makes a Man truly resemble GOD in the most Lovely of his Attributes (if I may be allowed to speak so.) GOD'S *Omnipotence* and *Omniscience* are proper Objects of fear and Reverence, but 'tis the consideration of his



his Goodness which especially begets our *Love to him*; yea 'tis this which makes him most Glorious, therefore when he shewed his Glory to *Moses*, he did it by proclaiming his Name, *the LORD GOD, Merciful, and Gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness, &c. Exod: 34. 6.* Because Goodness is the chiefest of the *Divine Attributes*, therefore the rest are set on work for the manifestation thereof; his Wisdom contrives, and his Power Acts, that by both he may shew his Goodness, *his Mercies are over all his Works.* Now as 'twill be acknowledged the *Highest Perfection* to be like *GOD* so the best and truest *Likeness to him* is to study to be good and Merciful as he is Good and Merciful: Though we could come to some resemblance of his Wisdom and Power, 'twould neither endear us to Him, nor to others, so much as the imitation of his Goodness. Who therefore would be Like *GOD*, who are Acted with such an *High and holy Ambition*, let them busie themselves in *doing good*, and according to their Power let them abound in *Works of Charity and Mercy*: For hereby they shall become partakers of the *Divine Nature*, and shall purchase a right to the same *Titles* which *GOD* takes to himself in *Scripture*, and indeed glories in, as the *Father of Mer-*

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*cies and Comforts*, the *Helper of the helpless*, the *Reliever of the needy*, & *such as are distressed*, &c. The half of the Money which some lay out for *Worldly Tittles* would procure these *Divine Designations*, which are by far preferable, and upon many considerations more Honourable.

*Fourthly*, this *Duty of Charity* is most pleasant and taking, 'tis not more for the Comfort of the distressed, then 'tis for the satisfaction of the *Charitable Man* himself: wherefore our *Saviour* said, *It is more blessed to give then to receive*; *Acts* 20. 35. *Acts of Bounty and Charity* truly rejoice the Heart, and fill the Soul with large measures of solid joy; there is far more Joy in *Spiritual Exercises*, then in any other; other pleasures are but *skin deep*, they are only some Titillations in the Body which soon vanish; but the Joy which results from *Vertue and Religious exercises* peirceth the Heart, and causeth the very Spirit to exult: and there is in Particular a special Pleasure in doing Good. As the desires of doing Good are of all other the Noblest, which made a *Heathen Poet* to call them *Sensus pars Optima Nostri*, so certainly the fulfilling thereof is attended with the Chiefest Satisfaction, has a gust and relish proper to delight a *Heaven born Soul*. 'Tis but small  
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delight which cometh from dainty Morsels, quaffing of Healths, for these are Bruitish exercises and inferiour to the Dignity of our Natures : But to feed the hungry , to afford drink to the thirsty Soul, to cloath the naked , to comfort those who mourn, to save the life which is ready to perish , and other the like Charitable deeds , are Exercises worthy of GOD himself, he delights in them, and how can it but delight and rejoyce us to be so Nobly and Divinely imployed ? If Men have reared up magnificent Structures, great Buildings , and made fine Gardens about them, they are ready to contemplate them with vanity, as Nebuchadnezar did his Babylon, saying, *Is not this great Babylon which I built* : O how mean a thing is it to be vain of these works which Wind and Weather can deface , Storms batter down, and time wear out ! But certainly there is Reason to rejoyce in being instrumental to rear up living fabricks , to repair the Temples of the Holy Ghost, and to preserve those who are capable to sound forth the praises of GOD to all Eternity. If People will but consult their Reason , and reflect on their own little Experience, they cannot but be perswaded of the unspeakable Pleasure in doing Good , in contributing seasonable comfort and relief to their fellow Brethren , in being able

to step in and pull them out of some *Sad Straite*, or to hold off the weight of a Crosse whose pressure is likely to fill them with excessive grief: 'Tis only the consideration of this pleasure, which makes Worldly Greatness desirable or Supportable, for abstracting from this, 'tis an uselesse burden, and a great impertinence which a Wise Man would shun and seek to be rid of.

*Fifthly, Acts of Charity and Bounty* are most profitable; and that upon many Accounts, *First*, they are Profitable, because hereby the Creatures of GOD are *Sanctified* to our use, and our enjoyment of them becomes Lawful, *Every creature of GOD is good*, saith the Apostle, *and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving*; 1 Tim: 4: 4. The Creatures are only good then, when thanksgiving is Joined to the use of them, which thanksgiving doth consist in a deep sense of GODS Propriety in the Creatures, and of his goodness in bestowing them upon us, & this sense must be expressed not only in Words but Deeds. The violating the Signs of GODS *Dominion over the Creatures* brought a curse upon them, for this cause *the Earth was cursed to us*; and this curse is not removed, but by returning to our Allegiance, by making an acknowledgement of  
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GOD'S Right and Dominion, in paying the Tribute which is due, and which he requires: The neglect of this keeps GOD from blessing our enjoyments, this is the reason why some as the Prophet Haggai speaks, *sow much and bring little, eat but have not enough; drink but are not filled with drink; Cloath themselves but are not warm; earn wages but 'tis put as 'twere into a bagge with holes Hag: 1: 6;* And as the giving GOD his due, sanctifieth the Creatures by taking away the curse upon them, So it rendreth our enjoyment of them Lawful and Sweet. We may freely use the Creatures, may *Eat our Meat with gladness, and Singleness of heart*, when we have discharged the Debt lying thereon, and payed the tribute of Gratitude we owe to GOD: But without this, our enjoyments can have no Delicious Relish, nor afford true satisfaction: They are attended with remorse and sting of Conscience, as the feasting of *Bankrupts*, or the riotous living of *Tennents*, who have not payed their Masters rent. 'Tis not Lawfull to sit down to full Tables, to be alwayes Eating the fat, and drinking the Sweet, whiles there is no regard of those who are at the *point of starving*; 'tis not Lawfull for any to ruffle it out in *Silke*, to hang their rooms with *Arras* & other costly hangings,

ings, whiles they see any perish for want of Cloathing, or any Poor without covering, and will not offer to help them, that *their Loins may Blesse them* as *Job* speaks, 'Tis an heinous crime which will not pass unpunished, to cast the *Childrens Bread to Dogs*; and are not they guilty of it who spend much on *Dogs, Hawks*, and other idle sports, but give nothing to the *Supply of the Poor, the Fatherless, and Widow*? But as the Enjoyments and pleasures of uncharitable Persons are unlawful and accursed, so who exerciseth *Charity* may lawfully indulge his desires, and allow himself what *Innocent Comforts* and conveniences this World affords.

*Secondly*, *Charity* is profitable for securing and preserving the Good things a Man hath; Every days experience may teach us the uncertainty of *Earthly things*; one may have much and soon come to Poverty; Fire, Violence, Treachery, and a thousand other Accidents, to which all are exposed, may very easily develt a man of his Wealth and Possessions, and 'tis impossible to prevent this, by our Foresight, Care, and Industry: our chief, yea, only security is in the *Divine Providence*, which we may lean to, if we testify our thankfulness by acts of *Charity and Bounty to the Poor*. By giving to the Poor

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we clip the wings of Riches, so that they can not flee so fast from us: But if the Poor be not the better of our Wealth it wants the *Divine protection*, and so is altogether defenceless, it hath no sure hedge about it. By denying the *Tribute of Charity* we break our *Tacks*, forfeit our right by which we hold our Possessions: And as Masters use to turn out those *Tennents* who pay not their Rent, so GOD taketh away the good things of this World from them who do not use them to his Glory, nor make any acknowledgment to him for them, or if he let them keep them, 'tis because he reserves them to a *Heavier judgement*.

*Thirdly*, Charity is profitable, because it tendeth to the encrease of our Wealth and Estate. As 'tis the best means to preserve our Fortune, so 'tis the likeliest way to enlarge it: *The Blessing of the LORD it maketh Rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it; Prov: 10. 22.* Which Blessing is particularly entailed on the *Charitable Man*, and therefore *Moses* having commanded to pay the *Triennial Tithes* to the Poor, addeth for an encouragement, *That the LORD thy GOD may blesse thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest, Deut: 14: 29:* Some are ready with *Judas* to count all lost which comes not into their own bagge, but what is given in *Charity*

is so far from losse, that 'tis great Gain, it returns with Usury. *He that hath pity on the Poor, lendeth to the LORD, and that which he hath given will he pay him again.* Prov: 19. 17. And that more may be expected then what is laid out we learn from many Texts in Scripture, *The liberal Soul shall be made fat, and he that wattereth shall also be watered himself,* Prov. 11. 25. Alms and Charitable Deeds may seem to impoverish us, but really they do it no otherwise then the Husband Mans throwing his Seed upon the Ground, which after some Moneths he receives with encrease; *There is that Scattereth, saith Solomon, and yet encreaseth; and there is that withholdeth more then is meet, but it tendeth to Poverty.* And because Charity contributes as much to Wealth as the ordinary way and Arts of Thriving, therefore he adviseth to use it, *In the morning, saith he, sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand for thou knowest not whither shall prosper, either this or that, or whither they both shall be a like good.* Eccl: 11: 6. Men indeed ought not to use Charity with this Design to be Rich, but neither need they be Discouraged from the Exercise thereof, for fear of redacting themselves to Poverty: for this is the ready way not only to prevent Poverty, but to ensure Wealth,  
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if the *Word of GOD* may be rested on. And who but Infidels will not rely on it? *GOD'S* hand is both the surest and most profitable Bank to put our Money in, other Persons and States may, and we see dayly do break and fail, but he will never fail nor turn unable to repay us with Advantage he hath promised perhaps to try *Mens* sincerity. *GOD* will keep up for some time this gain of Charity, but they shall receive it at one time or another; Many instances might be produced of these Advantagious returns of *Charity*, but I choose rather to let every one recollect their reading and Experience in this point, then to detain them farther. What doest thou know (they are the words of a dear Friend) *but those showres which did lately refresh thy corn, that prosperous gale which brought home thy commodity unto the desired haven, that advantagious bargain which thou hast made, that plea of of Law which thou hast gain'd may have been designed as a recompence of which thou hast bestowed? However I am sure that no Man shall have occasion to complain that he is a loser at GOD'S hands, and that he hath been decieved by that promise, that he who giveth to the Poor shall not lack.*

Fourthly, *Charity* is profitable in that it either prevents the *days of evil* or procures us

solide Comfort in them. *Man is born to trouble as the sparks flee upward; we are but of few dayes, but we are lyable to many Troubles, and therefore every wise Man should provide against them: but the best Provision we can lay up against the evil day of affliction, is to be liberal and Charitable in Prosperity.* When Daniel laid before *Nebuchadnezar* the disasters of his Dream, he advised him to take this course to prevent them: *O King, said he, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and breake off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the Poor, if it may be a lengthning if thy Tranquility, Dan. 4. 27.* But if Charity doth not altogether prevent Calamity and Affliction, 'twill be sure to lighten them, and to give us Comfort in them, even solide Comfort, the Consolations of GOD. Riches profite little in the *dayes of evil*, friends may then stand aloote, or if they come near, all they can do is to weep and waile; true and certain comfort cometh only from above, which a Charitable Man is sure of. For Blessed is he that considereth the Poor. the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him & keep him alive and he shall be blessed upon the Earth, and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies? The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, thou wilt make

make all his bed in his sickness. Psal. 41. 1. 2. 3. If saith the Prophet Isaiah, thou draw out thy Soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted Soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy Darknes be as noon day, and the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy Soul in drought, and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered Garden, and like a spring of Watters whose watters fail not. Isa. 58. 10. 11.

Fifthly, the profite of Charity goeth farther then Earth, it reacheth to Heaven, and gets us an interest there. 'Tis true Heaven is not merited by any deed of ours, we must not entertain any such thought: but certainly such good Deeds are followed with Heaven & happiness of the other Life. How much respect GOD will have to Acts of Charity and Mercy in bestowing Heaven, we may see from Mat. 25. and therefore St. Paul would have the Rich to do Good, to be rich in good works, ready to distribut, willing to communicate, thereby laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal Life, 1 Tim: 6. 18. 19. Here is the greatest advantage of Charity, and here we may see that the most profitable way of expending our Wealth, is to lay it out upon Works of Charity: For the profit of all other Works is limited to this life; the good of  
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them as to us expires with our Breath , and 'tis but seldom that it lasteth so long ; when a man dies he carries nothing away of all that he hath done otherwayes, except perhaps a troubled Conscience for being imployed so much to so little purpose. But the profit of good and *Charitable Works* accompanieth a man to the Grave , nay followeth him to the *other World* and purchaseth Friends there, *Friends which never die*, and which receive and welcome him to their *everlasting Habitations*. And seeing it is so , what senselesness is it to neglect *Charity* ? How much do they sit in their own light , who give not all diligence to abound in *Good Works* ? *nill we, will we*, we must remove hence; here we cannot stay alwayes, sometime or other we will be forced to pack to another World, and should we not then before hand secure a *Habitation*, and Endeavour that it may be well with us there ? if we were to be banished *this Kingdom* , or saw any necessity of leaving it , we Would take care to Transport our goods whither we intended to take up our residence or we would make money of them and carry bills thither , that we may have wherewith to sustain and comfort our selves : Now what madness is it , not to be as provident for our Souls, as for our Bodies ? why do we not distribute



bute our Goods to the use of the Poor and needy, that we may have Treasures in Heaven ? And that when this *Earthly tabernacle is dissolved we may be lodged in glorious and Eternal mansions* ? 'Tis strange to see how *fond Men* are upon Possessions here below, they will give all they are Worth, nay contract for more ( though it *Make their Life burdensome* ) to get an Heritage upon Earth, notwithstanding they are perswaded that they cannot abide with it. Now a *Purchase in Heaven may be had easilier*, it needs not all, nor half, nor the Fourth part of our goods to this, a *Tenth part Devotely disposed* will do the businesse : And is it not Wisdom then to lay out money rather upon this, which may be had so easily, which is best in it self, & which is of *Eternal Advantage* ? A *Charitable Person* of all others is the Wisest and Happiest, for he both enjoyeth the *good things of this present life*, and also has the *better things of the Life to Come* reserved for him.

6ly. The profite of Charity is not confined to the Persons of the Charitable Man, it descendeth to his children, it entails a Blessing upon his Posterity, and it goeth well with them for his sake. *His seed shall be mighty upon Earth, the generation of the upright shall be blessed, Wealth and Riches shall be in his*

his house: For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the Earth, and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off. All Parents that are not unnaturall with their Children well, and desire they may have wherewith to live honestly in the World after themselves are gone; now the best course for this is to be *Charitable*, for *Charity* secures to them the Favour of GOD, and the *Providence of the Almighty* which is the *Chiefest Treasure*; this makes GOD their *Tutor* and *Curator*, who is best able to manage their interest; and without him others can do but little. How many have left great Summes behind them, and much riches, whose Children have been Vagabounds running up and down *Seeking Bread*? The Blessing of the LORD is the best Inheritance, 'Tis the best Portion Parents can leave their Children, and Charitable Persons may bequeath it confidently. The *bountiful Man* needs not be troubled that he hath Little to leave among his Children, for GOD will Bless *that little*, and make it sufficient; *A little that a righteous man hath is better then the riches of many wicked*; Psal: 37. 16. That is, it goeth farther, doth more good, and is more profitable for the *Owners*. And though he hath no means at all to bestow, yet he has no Reason to vex him-

himself upon that account ; For GOD will then surely be their *Provisor* , GOD will repay to his Children what he lent to the Poor. *I have been young saith the Psalmist, and now am Old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his Seed begging Bread ; Psalm: 37. 25.* I shall not say no instance to the contrary can be shewed, but truly I believe very few ; let Men look abroad the World, observe themselves , and ask at others, and they shall find it generally true that the Children of the *Good and Merciful have met with singular Providences.* do not therefore excuse thy self from Charitable Deeds because thou hast a numerous Family and many Children , this is but to mock GOD and deceive thy self : Thou should rather take Pity on the Poor, *that mercy and compassion may be shewed to thine ;* that when Father and Mother forsake thy Children the LORD may take them up. What would People say or do if they were in the *Widow of Zarephtha's* Circumstance, *who had not a cake but an handful of Meal in a Barrel, and a little Oile in a cruse,* and that too in the dayes of great Famine? I suppose many would think they had Reason to deny even a Prophet himself, but did she loſe by giving a Morſel to *Elijah*? Did she prejudice her self or her Son? If she

she had refused the Prophet, she and her Son would have eaten all at one meale and then died: But because she fed the Prophet, therefore the *word of the LORD* was that *the barrel of Meal shall not wast, neither shall the cruse of Oyl fail, untill the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the Earth; 1. King: 17. 14.* Learn by this Example to obey the LORD, who hath commanded thee to *give bread to the Hungry, and Drink to the Thirsty*; Grudge not becaule thy Substance is small, trust in GOD, believe and obey his Word, and he will cause thy small Quantity of Meal and Oyle to last, and to be sufficient for thee and thy Children.

In the *Last place* it may engage us to be *Charitable* to consider the *Wretched state* and circumstances of *Uncharitable* and *hard Hearted Persons*. Their *Betters* despise them their Neighbours and Equals value them not, and the Poor envy and curse them; people talk of their Mistortunes and Disasters with Complacency, and murmur at any good which befall them: They have not the Love and Goodwill of the Generation they live in, and *when they die their name die with them*, or it is unfavourie and remembered with disgust. But this is the least part of their misery, they are no lesse odious



ous to God then to Man; he hates & abominates them, because they violate *his Laws*, despise his *Authority*, abuse his *Mercies*, and are unthankful for his *Goodness*; they counteract the *Methods of his Providence*, keep People from discerning the Beauty and Wisdom thereof, yea occasion many to Blaspheme his *Name*, therefore *his Soul abhorreth them*: And as *Blessings are upon the head of the Righteous* and *Mercifull*, so *curses are heap'd upon such wicked and hard hearted Persons*. If GOD blast not their Fortune altogether, it is kept to their hurt; as they harden their Hearts against the Poor, so the LORD shutteth their own Bowels upon themselves, so that they can as little allow themselves as others the necessary *Supplies of Nature*, he hath, but useth it as little as they who have nothing, which certainly is a great plague and curse; Behold, saith Solomon, it is good and comely for one to Eat and to Drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the Sun, all the dayes of his Life which GOD giveth him, for it is his Portion. Every man also to whom GOD hath given Riches and Wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his Portion, and to rejoyce in his Labour, this is the gift of GOD. But saith he, There is an evil which I have seen under the Sun, and it is common among Men,

( and indeed among none so common as among Uncharitable Men. ) *A man to whom GOD hath given Riches, Wealth, and Honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his Soul of all that he desireth, yet GOD giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it, this is vanity and it is an evil disease. Eccl. 5. 18, 19. 6. 12.* Farther it may be observed, that GOD often deprives such persons of the *comfort of Children*, or if they have them, for the most part they have little comfort in them: The Children of such ordinarily are graceless and debauch'd, they are averle from all *Honest Callings*, and use to lavish away what their Parents sordidely hoorded up; But as often they want Children: and he who hath Means and wanteth Children, hath but little satisfaction in his means, and far less in his Relations and Acquaintances; for he is filled with Jealousies and Suspicions against them, that they look greedily after his Estate, and wish him dead that they may grasp it, therefore he is ever altering and renewing his will; partly through jealousy, partly through his peevishness he puts off the making a wise disposition of his goods; he cannot think on it till his death, which surprizing him, hence it is that what he so anxiously gathered, and kept, often falls into

into the hands of those he little thought on, or cared for, which foolish end is all the subject of discourse at his Funeral, and every Bodies sport and laughter then and afterwards, *Finally* let us follow the *Uncharitable Man* unto the other World, and we shall see his case yet sader; there he stands more despicably then ever the Poor here did at his own door, and cries for help to as little purpose. *GOD hath no Mercy upon him, Angels and Saints stand aloof, he hath no Testificats from the Poor, can produce no Letters of Advice from these Factors of theirs here below to recommend him, and so those Heavenly inhabitants declare they know him not, they will not receive him to their Everlasting Habitations, and thus he is forced to lodge with Devils and Damned Spirits where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of Teeth.*

Thus we have proposed some *Motives* to *Charity*, more might have been laid before you, but these are sufficient; he who is not excited by these would not be moved by other Considerations, and he must be strangely hardened who is not convinc'd and perswaded by them. If what hath been said has any influence on the *Reader*, if he thereby find his Bowels moved and his heart in-

clined to *Charity*, I shall only say this farther to him, that he delay not the expressing his *Charity* till his *Death*, as too many do; the time and manner of thy *Death* is very uncertain, do good therefore whiles thou hast *Health*; leave not this work to thy *Heirs* or *Executors*, for thou knowst not how faithfull they will be; exerce *Acts* of *Charity* in thine own *Time*, give *Alms* with thine own *Hand*, and thereby thy *Sincerity* shall the better appear, and thou also shall have the greater *Satisfaction* thereof.

*The end of the Second Part.*



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## THE CONCLUSION.

**I** Have now gone through both Parts of Jacob's Vow, and illustrated them by the Light of the Gospel, thereby to demonstrate where our true Happiness lyeth, and by what Means we may compass it, The Reason why Jacob's Vow was pitched on to afford Instructions in these Material Points, was because I judged it very proper, and that such Instructions as are drawn from Examples are the most convincing. Now that I may summ-up all which hath been said, As all will acknowledge that 'tis of the greatest importance to be rightly informed about Felicity, and the Means of accomplishing it, so every one may learn this necessary knowledge here. In the First Part, is laid out the Folly of being fond on the things of this World, of thinking Happiness depends on Wealth and Worldly greatness; For as the pursuit hereof is certain Slavery, Toile, and Vexation, and of very uncertain success, so when one is arrived to a more then ordinary Measure of these things, what is he the better? He is as far from being Happy as he was before, except that he may be a little more sensible that Happiness lyes

lyes not there, and is able to witnesse from his Experience the truth of Haman's Verdict. All these things availe me nothing, Esth: 5. Never any sought Happinesse in Worldly things, but mett with a disapointment: For 'tis too weighty and important to stand upon such a Sandy Foundation, Men are not Happy by the Splendour and Grandeur of their Outward Condition and Circumstances, but when they have Inward peace and Satisfaction of Mind, Which they only have when they enjoy something agreeable to the Nature of their Souls, which answers their large (and I may almost say infinite) Desires which gives what is presently requisit, and ensures the continuance of all things necessary and Desireable. Therefore GOD only is and can be the Authour and Matter of Man's Felicity, for his Favour can only secure us of what our Present Life calls for, it is always attended therewith, and doth infallibly lead to Eternal and unspeakable Felicity, the very Hope whereof gives more Pleasure then all Worldly Enjoyments; yea, is able to make one Rejoyce in the midst of all the Troubles and Disasters of this Life.

Thus then instead of runing hither and thither in the search of this or the other Particular, we ought to seek GOD, and altogether to intend and endeavour the possessing our selves of his Love

Love and Favour , for the Favour of GOD is the foundation of true Felicity , and the enjoyment of Him , is the very Height and Completion thereof.

And as the scope of the First Part is to perswade Men of this , so it is endeavoured in the Second to lay before them the true and proper wayes of endearing themselves to GOD , by which they may purchase his Favour here , and qualify themselves for the Eternal Enjoyment of him hereafter. In shewing this nothing necessary has been omitted , every thing indeed could not be particularly handled , but what is not expressly mentioned is clearly included in the things spoken of ; so that who doth all here required , doth all that is necessary to Please GOD : Nor has any thing been proposed as necessary which is not really so, for on these Terms only GOD offereth Himself and his Benefits to Men. The acceptance of these Duties , when we perform them , is only in and through Christ, as hath been made appear : But they are in themselves necessary , even as necessary to obtain the Favour and Enjoyment of GOD , as this is to procure Happiness. They neither understand what GOD is , nor have they right notions of Eternal Life , who think to arrive there any other way, without Holiness , saith the Apostle , no Man shall see the LORD. And the Duties spoken of are necessary parts of True Holiness , as will appear

to any who considers the account given of them. As by the foregoing Treatise, the Nature of true Religion may be understood, and the right Manner of Performing the Publick and Private Exercises thereof, if people have a mind to set about them, and desire to be instructed in them: So if they be desirous to be inform'd of the Truth, and will not obstruct their own Conviction, they may here see the absolute Necessity of doing these Duties here laid before them. Let me therefore earnestly entreat the Reader to give way to his Conviction, and to beware of letting either his former Inclinations and habits, or the Customes of others divert him from the Practice of what he is convinced is necessary to the obtaining True and Eternal Felicity. I shall not offer to perswade any to seek to be Happy, for this would be as vain and impertinent as to bid a hungry Man eat, or a Thirsty Man drink; but I would entreat all to consider that 'tis the height of madness to expect to be happy without using the means necessary thereto, even as 'twould be great folly in a Hungry or a Thirsty Man to desire the allaying of his Appetite without eating and Drinking. What is it which hinders you from closing with these Means of Happiness? What keeps you from observing the Duties here enjoined? Do you think them unnecessary, that cannot be now pretended. Do you think them too much? What? Can there be too much Pa in s,



or Cost bestowed on Eternal and perfect Felicity  
None have Reason to grudge at these Conditions of  
Happiness, they are Just and Reasonable:  
This Service which GOD requires is no present  
Drudgery, and though 'twere, it could not be com-  
plained of, seeing so Glorious a Reward followes  
it, His yoke is easy, his Burden is Light,  
and this service he exacts is most Reasonable and  
desireable, take a view of the several Exercises  
and Employments of the Sons of Men, of the va-  
rious wayes of spending their Time, and there will  
be found none preferable to this. Idleness is an  
uneasy thing, and of all Occupations Religion is  
the most Manly, the most Noble the most Desire-  
able. As it hath the greatest Reward, so it gives  
at present the greatest Pleasure and Satisfaction.  
The wayes of Wisdom, that is of Religion,  
are waves of the pleasantness, saith Solomon,  
and all her paths are peace: And they are so  
even when they are set about with Thornes and Bri-  
ers. Great peace sayes David, have they who  
love thy Law, and nothing shall offend  
them. And he tells of himself, That he re-  
joiced in the way of GOD'S Testimonies,  
as much as in all Riches. I shall conclude all  
therefore in the words of our Saviour, if ye know  
these things, happy are ye, if ye do them.

F I N I S.

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